

2025 MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PREVIEW

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SHOHEI OHTANI'S
TWO-WAY TALENTS

PREVIEWS OF ALL
30 MLB TEAMS

15 STORYLINES
TO FOLLOW
IN 2025

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PROSPECTS

FANTASY
RANKINGS

Shohei Ohtani

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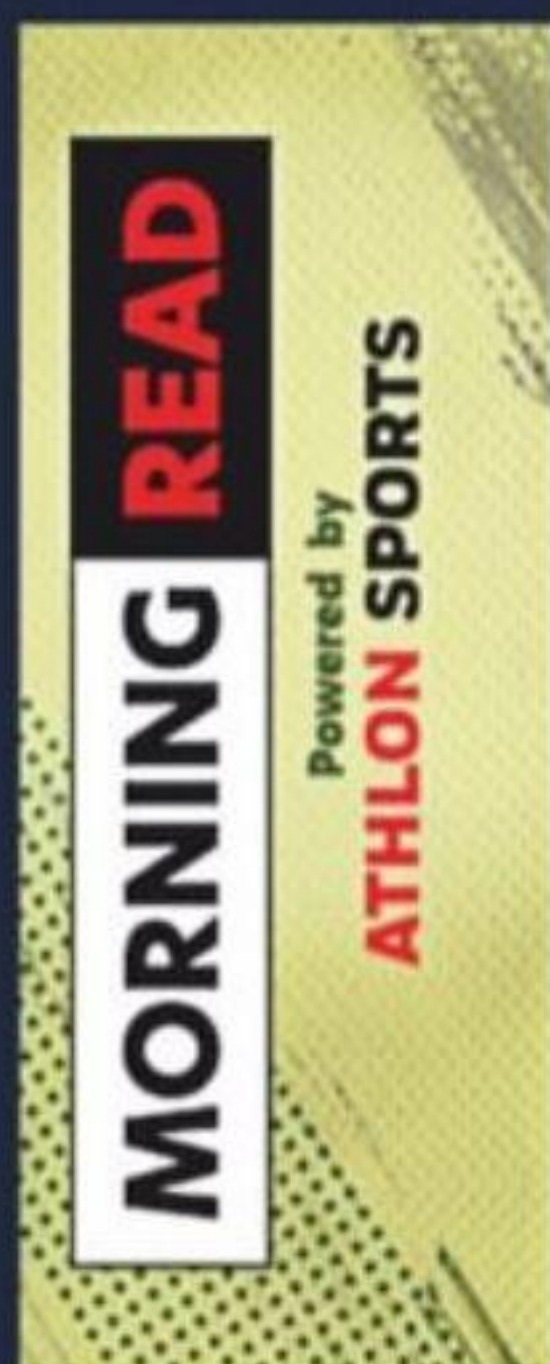


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EDITOR'S NOTE

Baseball is largely a self-sustaining entity; as players leave the stage, new ones stand ready to take their place. Veterans lose their spots to age or injury, but there's a seemingly bottomless well of young talent to draw from (just look at the prospect lists that accompany each team preview in this magazine).

But that doesn't mean we don't feel pangs of nostalgia and grief when our heroes depart for good. The past several months have been marked by the passing of some true legends of the game, and as we look ahead to another season, I'd like to pause and remember.

In 2024, we lost arguably the greatest player in baseball history in Willie Mays, the ultimate five-tool talent whose flair and mastery of the game made him the most riveting star that baseball ever had. We also lost the Hit King himself, Pete Rose, whose later life was consumed in controversy but who gave everything he had every time he stepped on a field.

We also bid farewell to Hall of Famer Orlando Cepeda, a teammate to Mays in a fearsome San Francisco lineup and an MVP in St. Louis. We said goodbye to Luis Tiant, whose unique delivery and craftiness thrilled young fans like me in the classic 1975 World Series. And as always, there were many others.

But one death hit me particularly hard — that of Rickey Henderson, the game's once and future stolen base king who was so much more than that. The ultimate table-setter and disruptor, Rickey accomplished baseball's primary objective — scoring runs — more often than anyone else, and in the process, he drove other teams absolutely crazy. (That fact that he sometimes drove his own team crazy was an entertaining side note.) Rickey's one-man rallies — walk, steal second and third, score on a grounder — made him one of baseball's most lethal weapons. Throw in the occasional leadoff homer (something he did a record 81 times) and you have an utterly unique figure in the game's history. I'll miss him, even (maybe especially?) his awkward malapropisms and third-person references that made him a latter-day Yogi.

But baseball marches on, with new stars who may actually outshine their predecessors (Shohei, anyone?). And after a couple years' hiatus, Athlon Sports is back to bring you an in-depth look at a new season courtesy of some of baseball's best scribes, including the great Sarah Langs, who shares her unmatched passion for and knowledge of the game to get us going with a look back at 2024's statistical potpourri. It's a great way to start another season.

ROB DOSTER, MANAGING EDITOR**SUBSCRIBE TO THE ATHLON SPORTS NEWSLETTER**

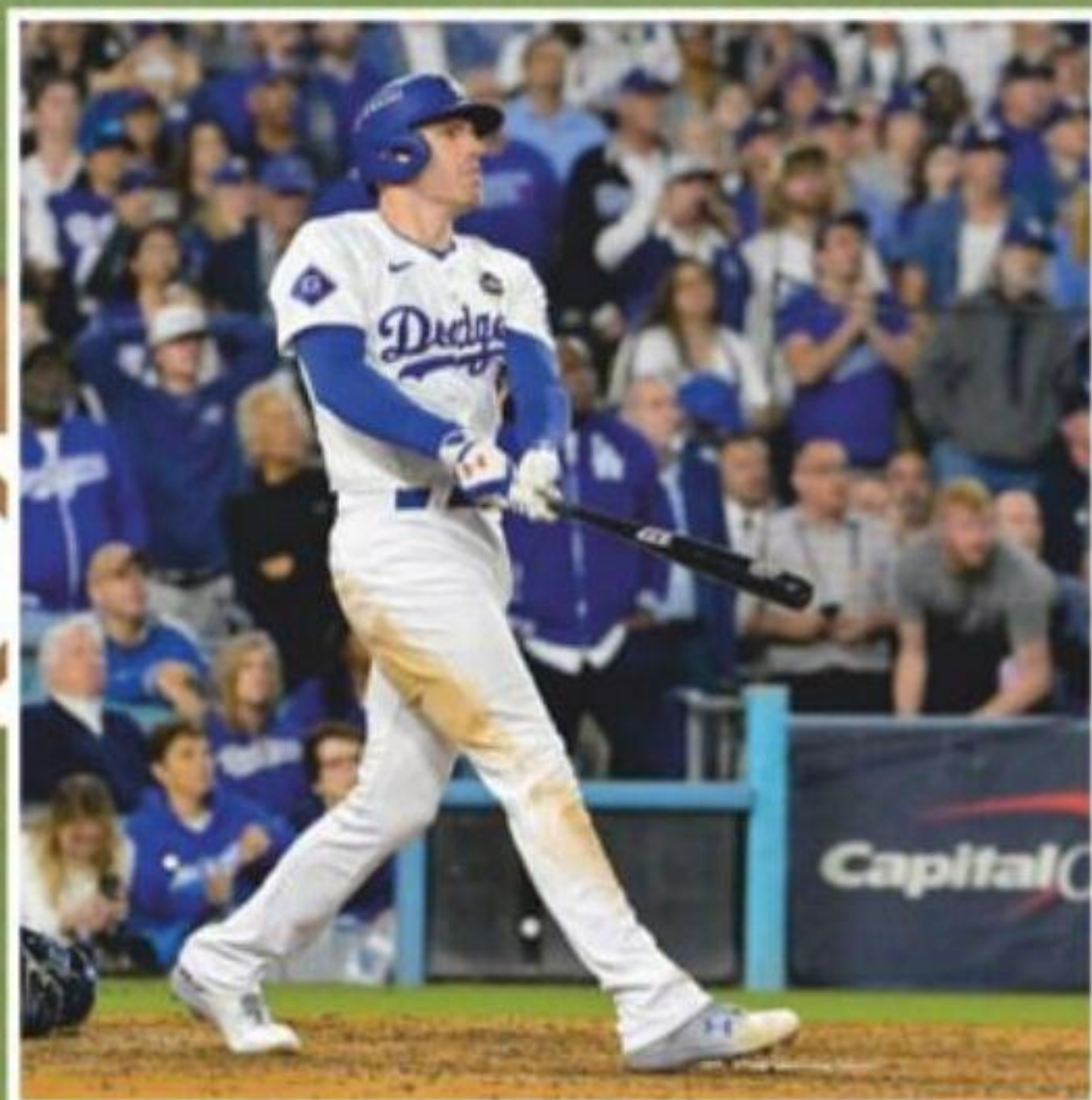
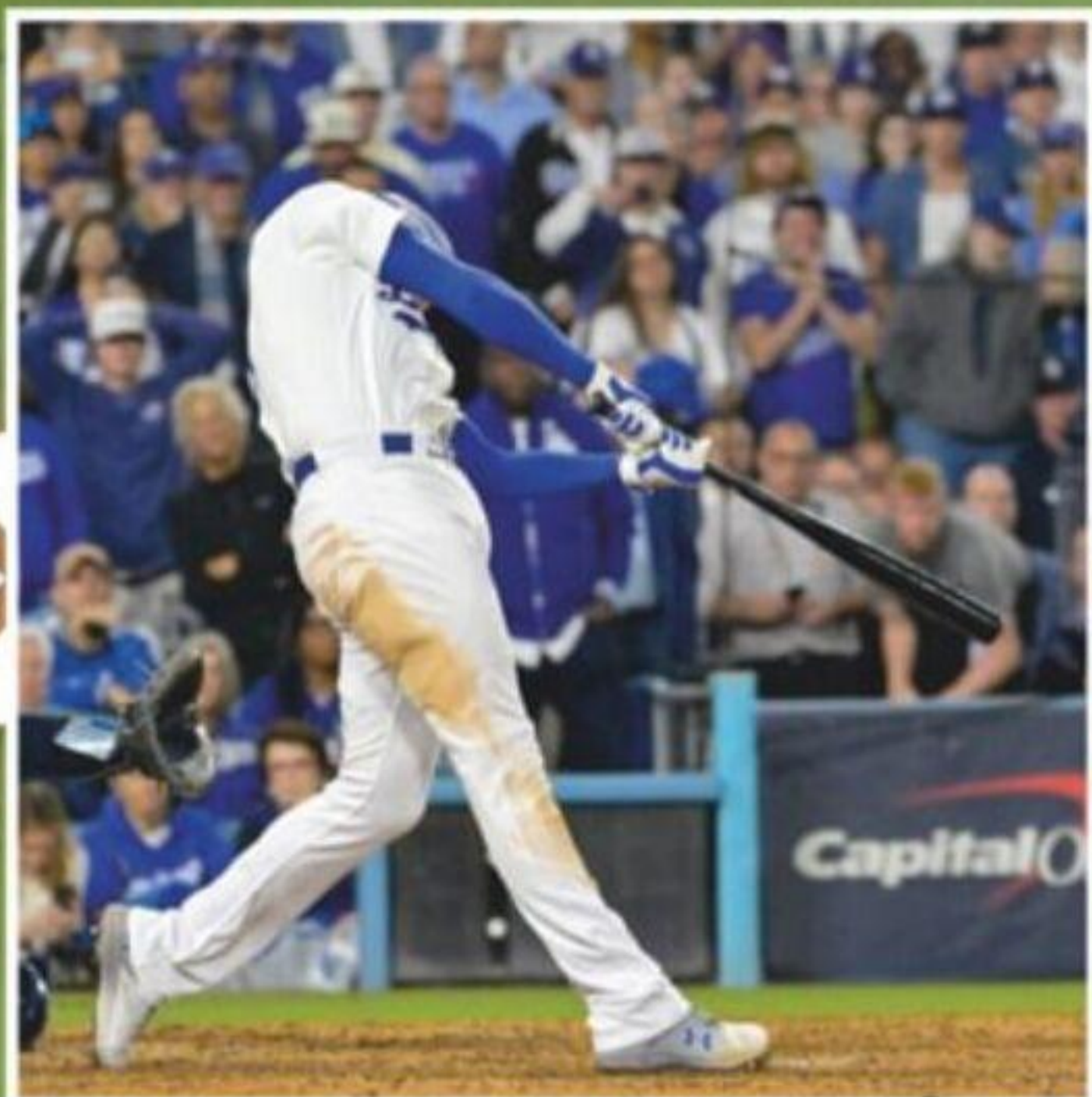
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FANTASTIC FREDDIE

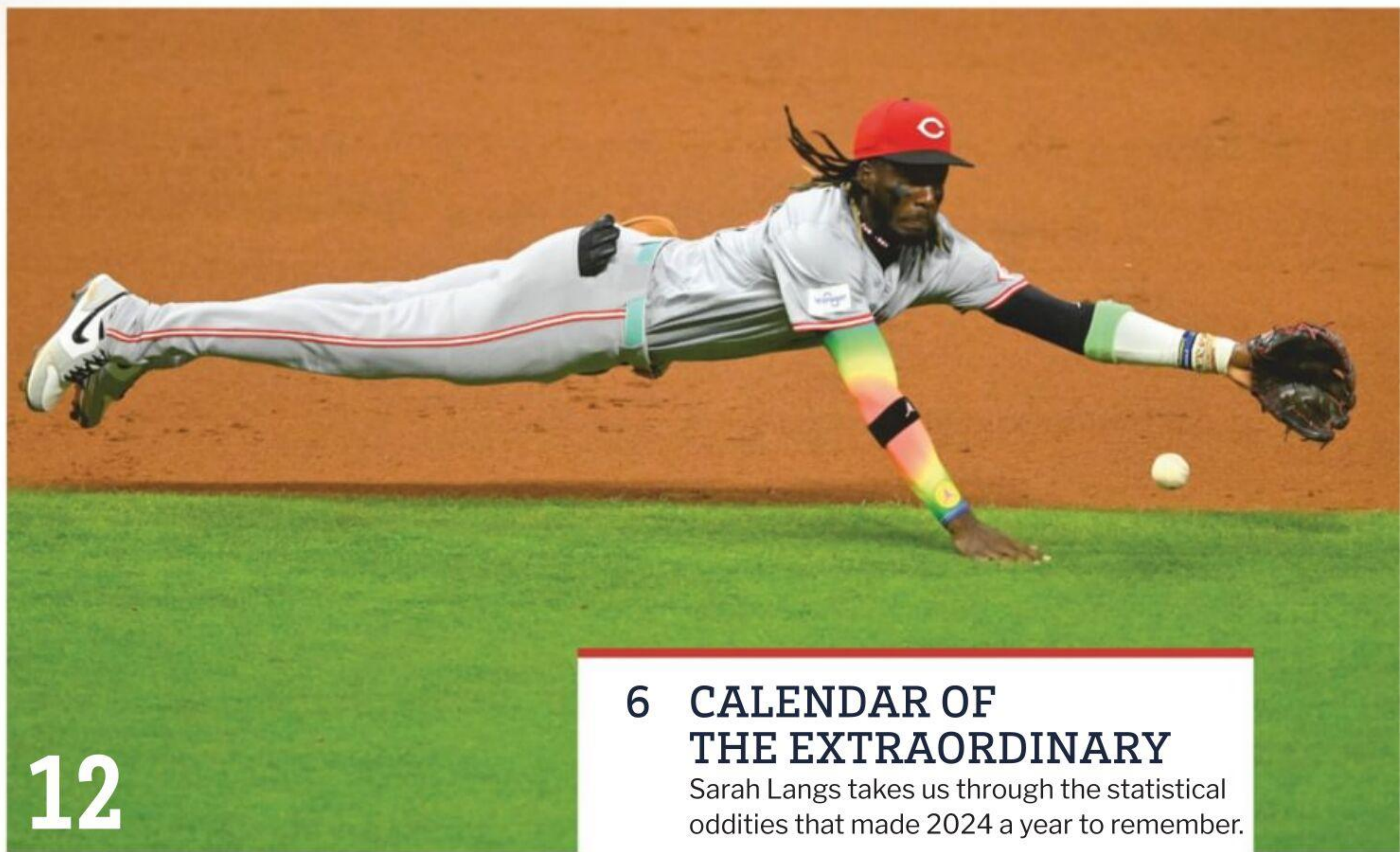
Freddie Freeman hit the first walk-off grand slam in World Series history in Game 1 of the 2024 Fall Classic. Freeman's 10th-inning bomb sparked the Dodgers' 4-1 series triumph over the Yankees.







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KIYOSHI MIO-IMAGN IMAGES



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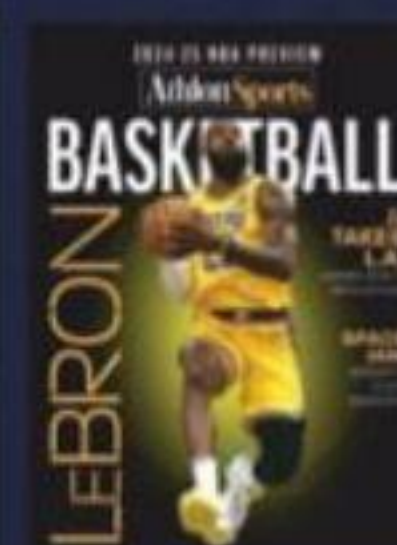
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CALENDAR OF THE EXTRAORDINARY

2024 had its share of the weird, the quirky and the statistically improbable • BY SARAH LANGS

MARCH

March 28 The Diamondbacks score 14 runs in the third inning against Colorado without hitting a home run, tied for the most by a team in an inning without a home run since 1900 (the Red Sox in the bottom of the seventh inning on July 4, 1948). Arizona wins 16-1, tied for the third-largest Opening Day win in MLB history.

March 31 The Yankees become the seventh team to open a season with four or more straight wins after being tied or trailing in the sixth inning or later in each game. They join the 2015 Reds, 1982 White Sox, 1957 White Sox, 1914 White Sox, 1911 Highlanders (now Yankees) and 1901 Tigers.

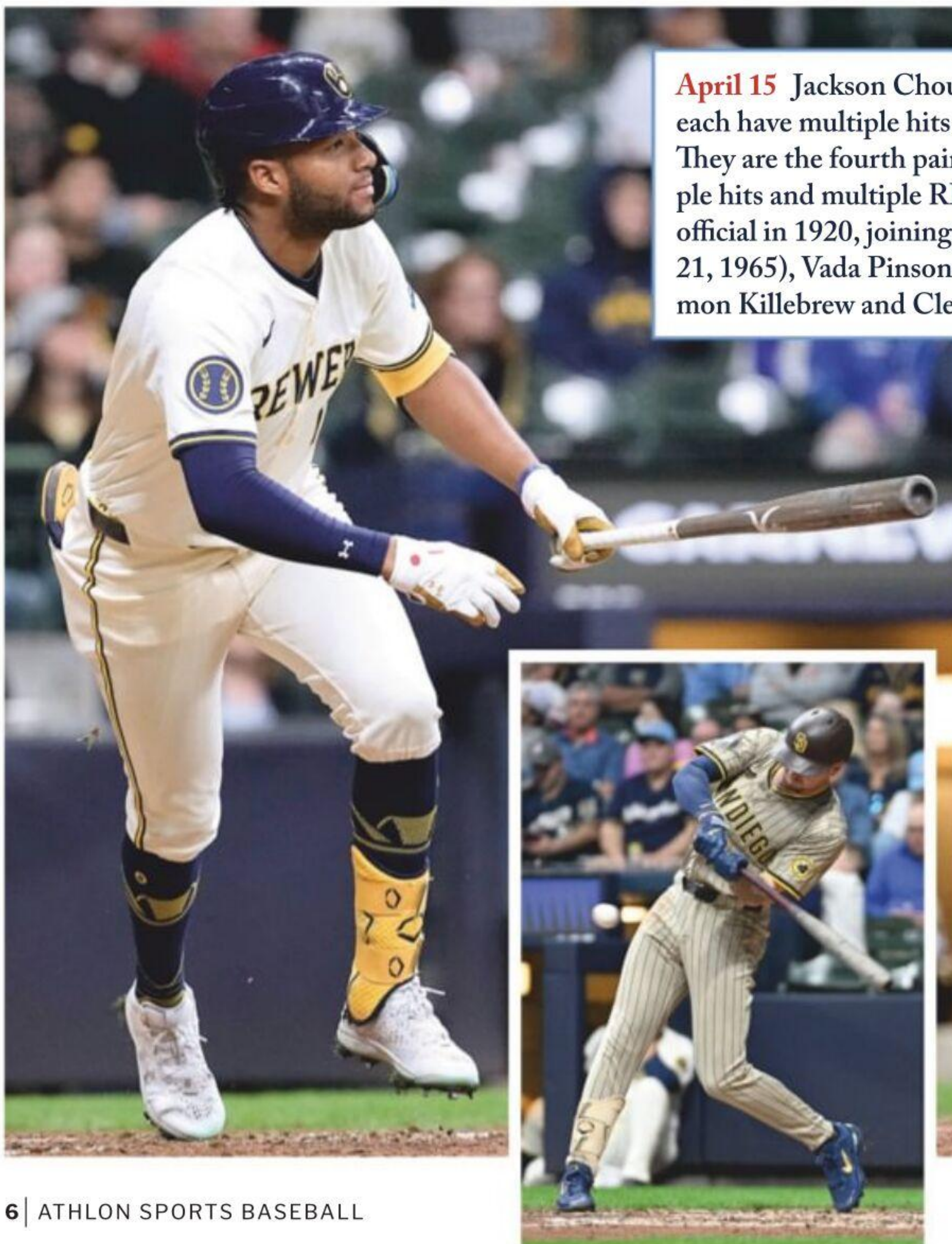
APRIL

April 10 On National Siblings Day, Bo and Josh Naylor's 10th-inning heroics mark the third time one brother has a game-tying RBI and another has the game-winning RBI both in the ninth inning or later in the expansion era (1961). They join the Uptons (April 6, 2013) and Ripkens (Sept. 7, 1988).

April 15 Jackson Chourio (left) and Jackson Merrill (below) each have multiple hits and multiple RBIs in the same game. They are the fourth pair of players 20 or younger each with multiple hits and multiple RBIs in the same game since RBIs became official in 1920, joining Tony Conigliaro and Tony Horton (Aug. 21, 1965), Vada Pinson and Ron Fairly (May 18, 1959) and Harmon Killebrew and Clete Boyer (July 16, 1955).

April 26 Willson Contreras hits a 445-foot, 114.2 mph home run to left-center. The home run is almost a visual copy of one his brother William hit the day before. William's was 448 feet and 114.4 mph, also to left center.

April 27 With four-hit games this season in South Korea, the US and now Canada, Dodgers catcher Will Smith becomes the fourth player to have a game with at least four hits in three different countries/territories in a single season. He joins DJ LeMahieu in 2019 (England, USA, Canada), Endy Chavez in 2004 (USA, Puerto Rico, Canada) and Marcus Giles in 2003 (USA, Canada, Puerto Rico).



FROM LEFT: JEFF HANISCH-USA TODAY SPORTS; MICHAEL MCLOONE-USA TODAY SPORTS

MAY

May 1 Ketel Marte and Chris Taylor each play their 1,000th career MLB game in the Dodgers-Diamondbacks matchup. It's the fifth time in MLB history two players reach their 1,000th game in the same game and the first time the two are opposing players. The incredible part: When the Mariners called Marte up for his MLB debut in '15, Taylor was the player sent down.

May 4 Shohei Ohtani hits his eighth home run with the Dodgers, giving him sole possession of the most by a Japanese-born player in franchise history. The record he breaks had previously belonged to his now-manager, Dave Roberts.

May 11 The Pirates issue six bases-loaded walks, becoming the third team since 1957 to do so in a game, joining the White Sox on May 7, 1992, and the Athletics on April 22, 1959. Pittsburgh wins the game, just like the White Sox did in 1992.

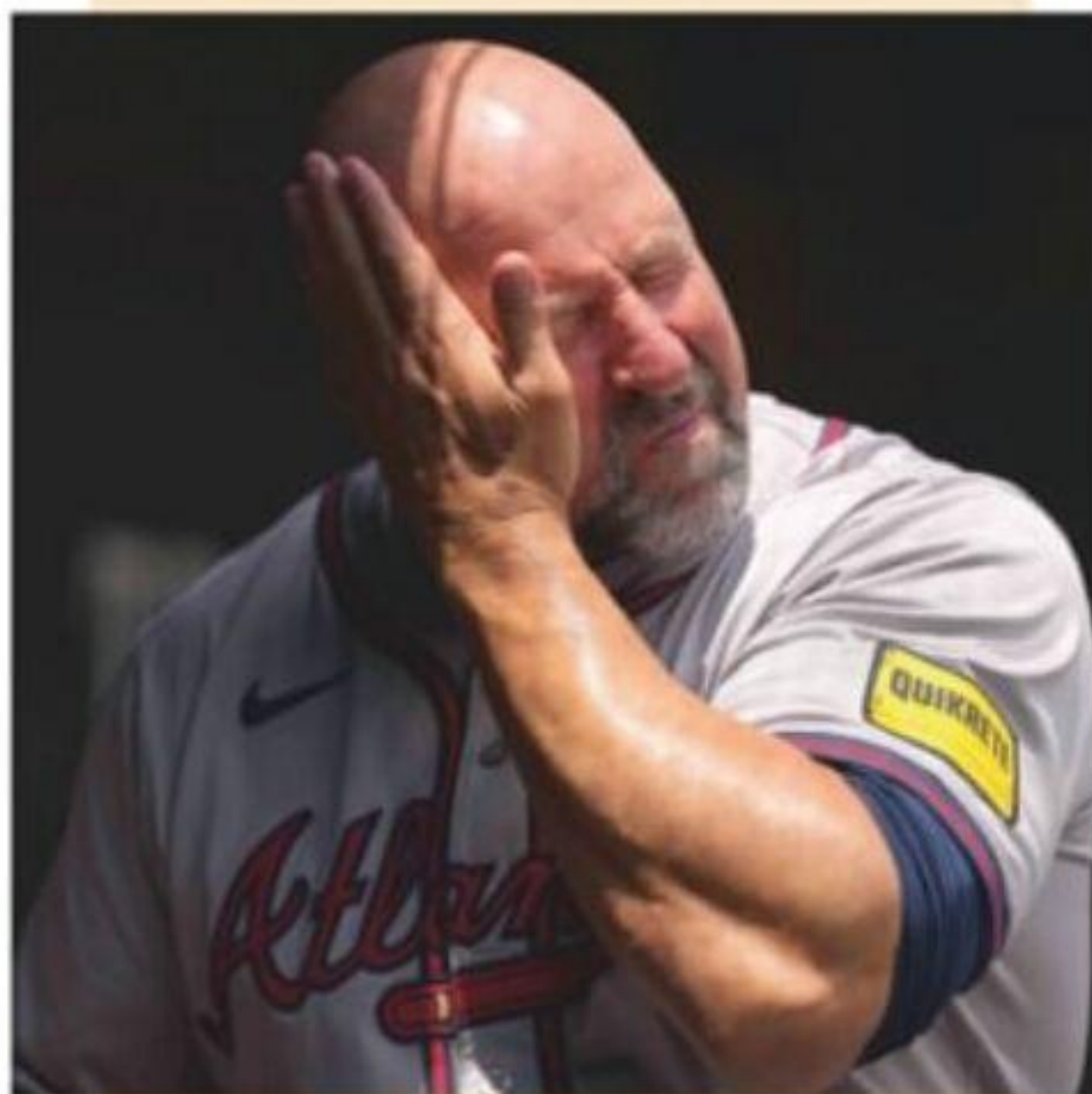
May 15 Jordan Westburg hits a leadoff homer for the Orioles, who win 3-2 on an Adley Rutschman two-run walk-off home run. It is the fourth game in MLB history in which a team hits a leadoff home run and a walk-off home run and scores no runs in between. The others are the Phillies on Sept. 2, 1983; the Athletics on Aug. 22, 1971; and the Braves on Aug. 9, 1966.



May 29 Paul Skenes strikes out nine batters, the most by a pitcher on his birthday at age 22 or younger (since at least 1901). It's also the most by a Pirates pitcher on his birthday in that span.

JUNE

June 9 Carlos Santana and Andrew McCutchen hit leadoff for the Twins and Pirates, respectively. It is the second game in MLB history in which both starting leadoff hitters entered the game with at least 300 career home runs. The other was July 16, 1964 (Eddie Mathews and Duke Snider).



June 12 The Braves lose their fifth game in a row for the first time since Sept. 2017. They went 934 games between losing streaks of at least five games, the second-longest such streak in MLB history, behind only the Yankees' 1,243 games between five-game skids from 1930-38.

June 16 By moving to 37-35, the Red Sox snap a streak of 10 consecutive distinct .500 records (i.e. 26-26, 27-27, 28-28 and so on, up to 35-35), which was a franchise record.

June 22 Bailey Ober throws a 10-strikeout complete game on just 89 pitches. He's the second pitcher to throw a complete game with at least 10 strikeouts on fewer than 90 pitches since pitch counts have been tracked (1988), joining David Cone on July 18, 1999, in Cone's perfect game.

JULY

July 6 Jose Miranda records a hit in his 12th straight at-bat, tying the MLB record set in 1902 by Johnny Kling and then tied by Pinky Higgins in 1938 and Walt Dropo in 1952.

July 10 Nick Pivetta becomes the second pitcher since 1900 to strike out at least eight straight batters in two games in the same season, joining Jacob deGrom in 2021. The only other pitchers since 1900 to do this more than once in their careers are deGrom (four times) and Nolan Ryan (twice).

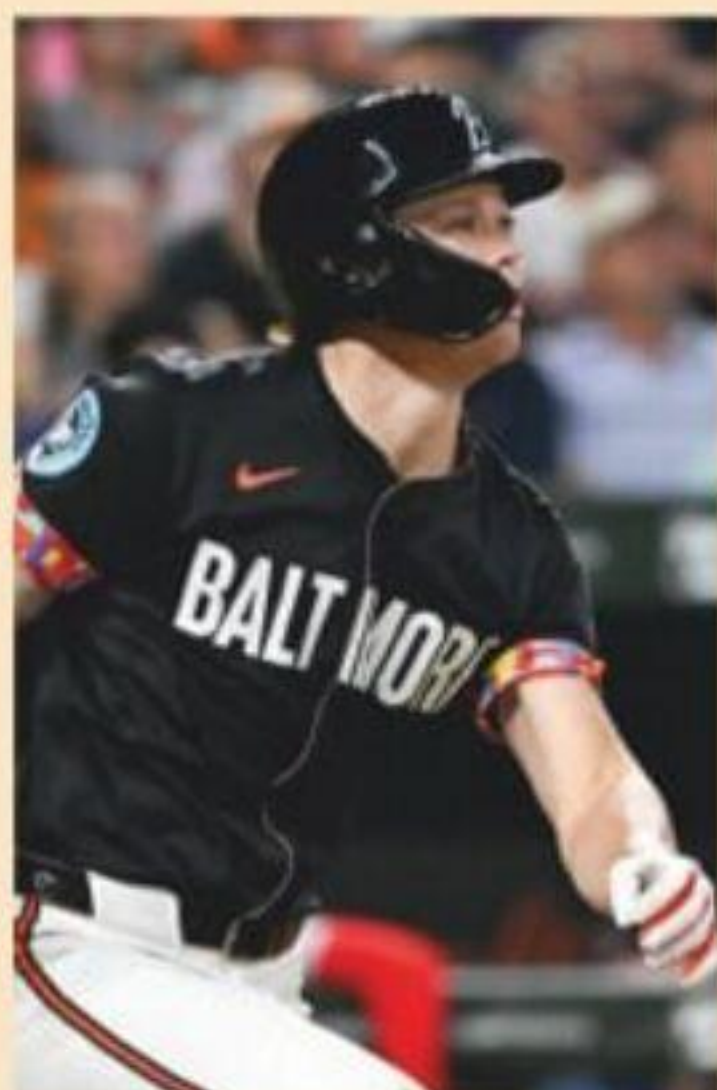
July 28 Xavier Edwards hits his first career home run in a game in which he hits for the cycle. He becomes the eighth player to hit his first career home run in a game in which he cycles, joining Fred Lewis (May 13, 2007), Luke Scott (July 28, 2006), Gary Ward (Sept. 18, 1980), Cliff Heathcote (June 13, 1918), Bill Hassamaer (June 13, 1894), Bill Van Dyke (July 5, 1890) and Chippy McGarr (Sept. 23, 1886).



July 31 Jackson Holliday hits his first career grand slam. With Holliday and Jackson Chourio, this is the fifth season to have multiple players hit a grand slam at age 20 or younger, joining 1976 (Butch Wynegar, Kevin Bell), 1952 (Mickey Mantle, Faye Throneberry), 1911 (Vic Saier, Stuffie McInnis) and 1890 (Malachi Kittredge, George Davis).

AUGUST

Aug. 16 Three Jacksons — Chourio, Holliday and Merrill (below) — each hit triples. They're the first trio of players, all age 21 or younger, to each have a triple on the same day since Jack Clark, Robin Yount and Terry Puhl Aug. 27, 1977.



Aug. 17 Dairon Blanco drives in seven runs, tied for the second-most RBIs out of the No. 9 spot in a game since RBIs became official (1920), behind only Tony Cloninger's nine on July 3, 1966.

Aug. 25 Jackson Merrill hits his fifth game-tying or go-ahead home run in the ninth inning or later. That's the most in a season at age 21 or younger all-time, passing Mel Ott in 1929.

Aug. 27 Spencer Schwellenbach (below left) opposes Simeon Woods Richardson (below right), and the two combine for 28 total letters in their last names. That's the most letters in combined last names of any starting pitcher matchup in MLB history.



Aug. 30 Corbin Carroll hits a double, snapping his streak of 21 consecutive extra-base hits that were either triples or home runs. That was the longest streak of extra-base hits that were either triples or homers since Roger Maris had 22 straight in 1961, all of which were home runs.

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 11 For the second time this season, Bowden Francis loses a no-hit bid in the ninth inning. He's the first pitcher with two no-hit bids lost in the ninth inning in a season since Nolan Ryan in 1989.

Sept. 18 Aaron Judge enters the day with 26 more RBIs than any other player in MLB. That's the largest margin for the MLB RBI leader entering a day since Ted Williams led Joe DiMaggio by 26 RBIs on Sept. 26, 1942. The 26-RBI difference is the same as the difference between No. 2 Shohei Ohtani (110) and No. 32 Bryce Harper (84).



Sept. 23 Matt Chapman becomes the first Giants player with an inside-the-park home run and a triple in the same game since Monte Irvin on July 18, 1953. It's the first time any MLB player has done it since the Nationals' Michael A. Taylor on Sept. 8, 2017.

Sept. 28 Shohei Ohtani reaches 10 homers and 10 stolen bases for the second consecutive calendar month. He's the first player in MLB history with that combination in a calendar month multiple times in a career. It had happened seven times before — by seven different players.

Sept. 30 The Mets become the second team to clinch a postseason berth in a game where they were behind heading into the eighth, took a lead (or tied), then fell behind again (or tied) and then retook the lead in the ninth inning, joining the Pirates on Sept. 18, 1903.

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OCTOBER

Oct. 1 Game 1 of the NL Wild Card Series between the Braves and Padres takes two hours and nine minutes. That's the fastest postseason game since Game 2 of the 1996 NLDS between the Braves and Dodgers — Greg Maddux and Ismael Valdez were the starting pitchers — which lasted two hours and eight minutes.



Oct. 2 Bobby Witt Jr. joins Jimmie Foxx as the only players to drive in the game-winning run in each of their first two career postseason games. Foxx's were Games 1 and 2 of the 1929 World Series (A's vs. Cubs; A's won in five games).

Oct. 5 Lane Thomas homers in his first postseason plate appearance, becoming the third player in MLB history to homer in both his first career regular-season plate appearance and first career postseason plate appearance, joining Gary Gaetti and Eddie Rosario.

Oct. 9 Alex Cobb makes his first postseason appearance since starting Game 3 of the 2013 ALDS for the Rays. He's

the first pitcher to go at least 10 seasons between postseason starts since Bret Saberhagen (1985 World Series Game 7 to 1995 NLDS Game 4).

Oct. 14 At 25 years and 355 days old, Juan Soto becomes the youngest player at the time of his first home run in the postseason for a third team, surpassing Manny Machado in 2020 (28 years, 87 days).

Oct. 19 Bo Naylor drives in his brother, Josh, in ALCS Game 5. It's the fourth instance in a postseason game of a brother driving in brother, joining Jeremy and Jason Giambi in 2001 ALDS Game 4, Tony and Chris Gwynn in 1996 NLDS Game 2 and Paul and Lloyd Waner in 1927 World Series Game 2.

Oct. 25 Freddie Freeman triples in the first inning and Enrique Hernández does so in the fifth, marking the Dodgers' first two hits of the 2024 World Series. The Dodgers are the second team to triple for their first two hits of a World Series, joining the 1953 Yankees (Hank Bauer and Billy Martin).



Oct. 30 For the fifth straight season, a player named Will Smith wins a World Series — C Will Smith (LAD) in 2024, LHP Will Smith (TEX) in 2023, LHP Will Smith (HOU) in 2022, LHP Will Smith (ATL) in 2021 and C Will Smith (LAD) in 2020.

NOVEMBER

Nov. 18 Paul Skenes and Luis Gil are the first pair of starting pitchers to win Rookie of the Year in the same season since 1981 (Dave Righetti and Fernando Valenzuela).

Nov. 20 Tarik Skubal and Chris Sale win Cy Young honors. It's the third time that both Cy Young Awards are won by left-handed pitchers in the same year, joining 2002 (Randy Johnson and Barry Zito) and 1977 (Steve Carlton and Sparky Lyle).

Nov. 21 Shohei Ohtani wins yet another unanimous MVP. He's the only player to win the award unanimously more than once, and he has now done so three times. His first MVP Award with the Dodgers makes him the second player to win MVP in both leagues, joining Frank Robinson (1961 Reds, 1966 Orioles). He's also the second player to win MVP in consecutive seasons with different teams, joining Barry Bonds in 1992 (Pirates) and '93 (Giants).



(Source for some of this material: Elias Sports Bureau and STATS)

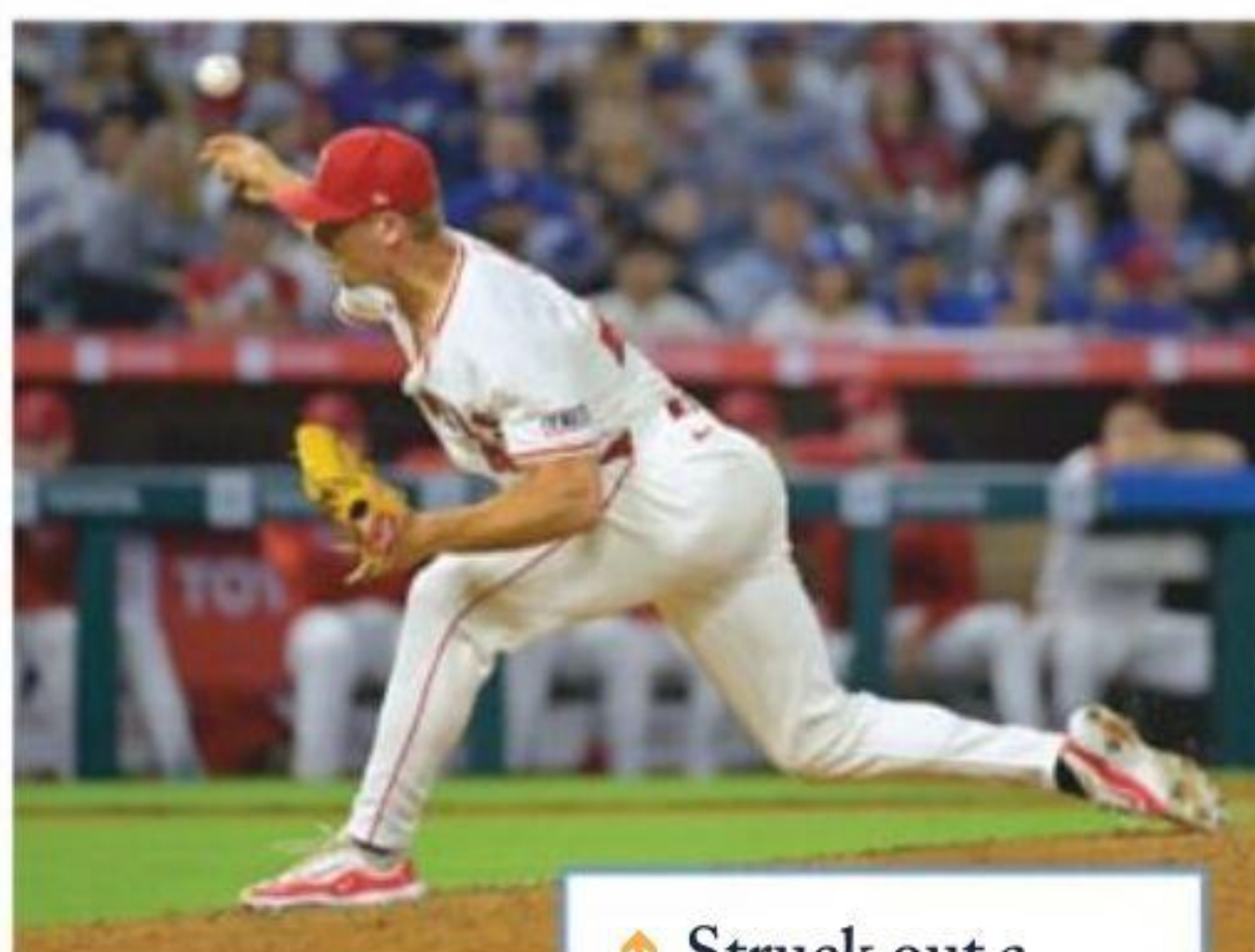
FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING

2024 was the first time that...

BY SARAH LANGS

A PITCHER

- Recorded as many as 44 outs before his first hit allowed to begin a season, since the mound was moved to its current distance in 1893 (Ronel Blanco).
- Struck out at least 14 batters in an outing of fewer than 90 pitches, since pitch counts were first tracked in 1988 (Tyler Glasnow, April 9).
- Had a scoreless 15-game span with more than 35 strikeouts and fewer than five walks, since 1901 (Mason Miller).
- Went at least six innings and allowed zero or one hit in three straight outings, since 1901 (Dylan Cease).
- Struck out at least eight consecutive batters in his team debut (Yusei Kikuchi, Aug. 2, HOU).
- Who was Japanese-born started a postseason game opposite another Japanese-born starting pitcher (Yoshinobu Yamamoto vs. Yu Darvish, NLDS Game 5).
- Finished top-five in Cy Young voting after doing so in at least five straight years and then finishing outside the top five (or no votes at all) in at least five straight years immediately after (Chris Sale).
- Won a Cy Young Award on his birthday (Tarik Skubal).



↑ Struck out a batter on a 105.0 mph or faster pitch (**Ben Joyce** 105.5 mph, Sept. 3).

A GAME

- Had at least five runs in the top of the first, at least five runs in the bottom of the ninth and no runs scored in between (Rockies at Marlins, April 30).
- In the postseason had as many as five lead changes (**Royals-Yankees, ALDS Game 1**).



A PLAYER

- And his brother had both reached the majors and then each had a son reach MLB (Al & Mark Leiter, Jack & Mark Jr.).

↑ Racked up at least 65 stolen bases and 50 extra-base hits within one year of his first game in the majors, since 1900 (**Elly De La Cruz**, June 6).

- Was an All-Star the year after being drafted in the June/July amateur draft (Paul Skenes).
- Was on an All-Star Game roster having played as few as 11 career games at the time (Skenes).
- Hit a home run and had multiple outfield assists on his birthday, since 1900 (Ian Happ, Aug. 12).
- Played for both teams in the same game (Danny Jansen, June 26 game resumed Aug. 26 after he was traded from TOR to BOS).
- Made at least 25 appearances at five or more defensive positions in a season (Willi Castro, SS/2B/LF/CF/3B).
- Who was Japanese-born started a postseason game with two other Japanese-born starters (Shohei Ohtani, Yamamoto, Darvish, NLDS Game 5).
- Played a World Series game on his birthday for a second team in his career (Juan Soto, Game 1 for NYY; 2019 Game 3 for WAS).

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: MAX CORREA / MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL; BRAD PENNER-IMAGN IMAGES; JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA-IMAGN IMAGES

A BATTER

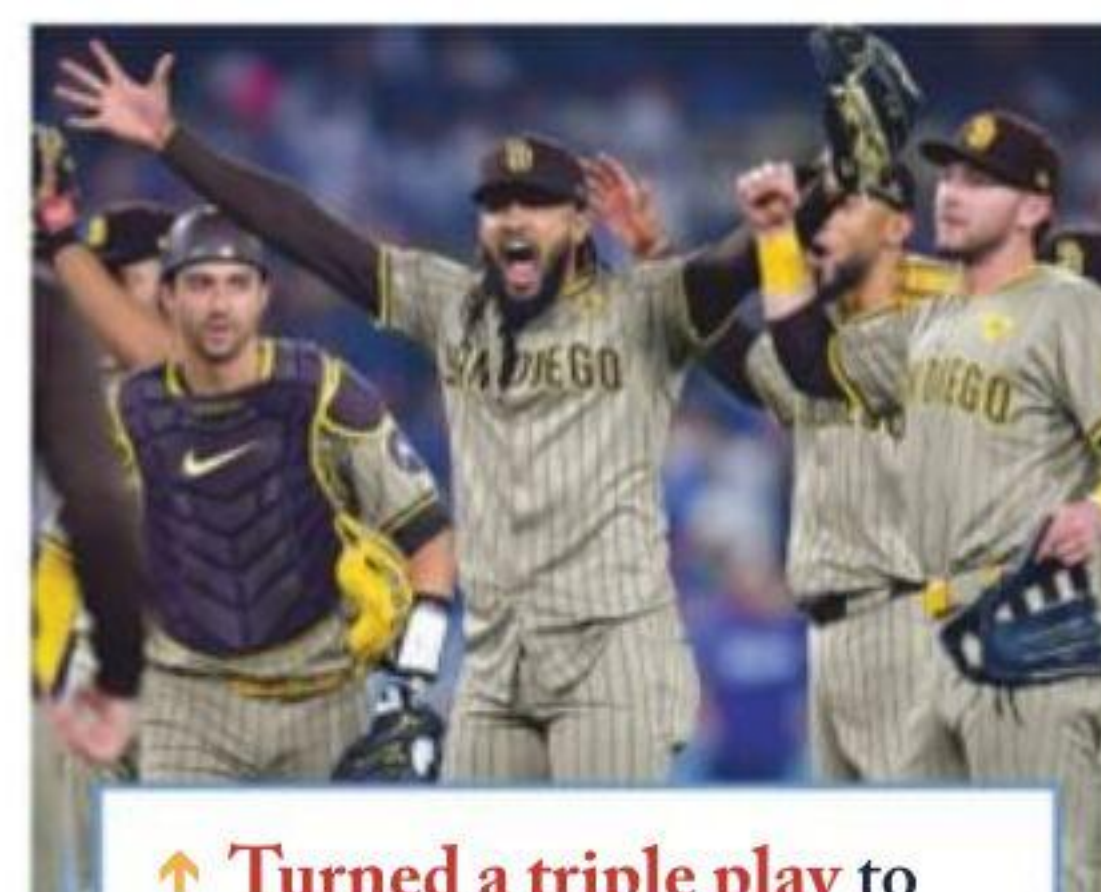
- Homered on a fifth consecutive Opening Day (Tyler O'Neill).
- Recorded a go-ahead RBI in the seventh inning or later in three of his first four games with a team, in the expansion era (1961) (Soto, NYY).
- Caught a no-hitter in a game in which he hit two home runs (Yainer Diaz, April 1).
- Hit multiple homers including a grand slam in a game in which his teammate did the same (Bryan Reynolds and Rowdy Tellez, July 5).
- Recorded at least three hits in each of his first four games following the All-Star break (Bobby Witt Jr.).
- Had two multi-homer games in his first three games with a franchise (Jazz Chisholm Jr., NYY).
- Had at least two RBIs in the seventh, eighth and ninth innings of a single game, since RBIs became official in 1920 (Christian Bethancourt, Aug. 28).
- Who was right-handed had a Splash Hit into McCovey Cove (Heliot Ramos, Sept. 15).
- Had multiple stolen bases in a game in which he hit three home runs (Ohtani, Sept. 19).
- Had five stolen bases and five home runs in a four-game span, since 1900 (Ohtani, Sept. 19-22).
- Had at least 50 homers and 50 stolen bases in a season (Ohtani).
- Won a batting title in a third consecutive season with a third different team (Luis Arraez, SD/MIA/MIN).
- Hit a go-ahead home run while trailing in the ninth inning or later of a winner-take-all postseason game (Pete Alonso, NLWCS Game 3).
- Hit a grand slam to account for all of his team's runs in a series-clinching postseason win (Francisco Lindor, NLDS Game 4).
- Who hit 50 homers in the regular season played in the World Series against another who also did so (Aaron Judge, Ohtani).
- Homered in each of the first four games of a World Series (Freeman).



↑ Homered off of a pitch of least 103.0 mph (**Ian Happ**, 103.2 mph, Sept. 17).

A TEAM

- Faced just three batters and struck them all out in the first inning in three straight games, in the expansion era (Dodgers).
- Had each of its first six wins of the season be one-run and/or extra-inning wins (Tigers).
- Had three All-Star position players who were in their third big-league seasons or earlier (BAL: Jordan Westburg, Gunnar Henderson & Adley Rutschman).
- Played four straight games in a postseason where the team trailing entering the eighth won the game. No other team had done three straight (Mets, NLWCS Game 2 through NLDS Game 2).



↑ **Turned a triple play** to end a game on the day they clinched a postseason berth (Padres, Sept. 24).

- Hit multiple home runs in the first inning of a World Series game when facing elimination (Yankees, Game 5).
- Came back from a deficit of at least five runs in a World Series-clinching win (Dodgers, Game 5).

A MANAGER

- Got his first win, either in MLB or for a particular team, in a no-hitter (Joe Espada, April 1).
- Who was a rookie managed in the LCS in the same year as another rookie manager (Stephen Vogt, Carlos Mendoza).
- Won Manager of the Year within two seasons of playing (Vogt).

A SEASON

- Featured as many as four no-hit bids broken up with a home run in the ninth inning or later (J.D. Martinez, 5/11; Corey Seager, 8/6; Taylor Ward, 8/24; Lindor, 9/11).
- Had a postseason series that featured two of the five youngest teams in the league that season, when going by end-of-season rosters (Tigers-Guardians ALDS).

A ROOKIE

- Had a cycle, grand slam and an inside-the-park home run in a season (Wyatt Langford).
- Hit a game-tying home run in the ninth inning or later of a postseason game (Jhonkensy Noel, ALCS Game 3).

(Source for some of this material: Elias Sports Bureau and STATS)

15 THINGS TO WATCH IN 2025

NEW EPISODE OF SHO-TIME

For **Shohei Ohtani**, every season comes with a new batch of storylines. Last year, it was a huge contract, a new team, a devious translator (surprise twist!), a championship pursuit — and, as he recovered from a serious elbow operation, a new club to create: the 50/50 Club.

We know how all that turned out — the Dodgers won the World Series, the translator went to prison and Ohtani, baseball's (heavily deferred) \$700 million man, became the first player ever with 50 home runs and 50 stolen bases in the same season.

But when Ohtani attempted a steal in Game 2 of the World Series, he dislocated his left shoulder on the dirt at Dodger Stadium. He played the final three games in obvious pain and underwent arthroscopic surgery for a torn labrum four days after the parade. It's his non-throwing shoulder, the back one in his swing. But it creates a whole new set of complications.

How will the shoulder surgery impact the final stages of Ohtani's elbow rehab? When will he return to pitch, and what kind of workload can he handle? And if the Dodgers are counting on him as a two-way player, it's a safe bet they won't allow him to run the way he did in 2024. Expect his stolen base total to be closer to zero than to last year's 59.

Of course, we're talking about the most talented all-around player — pitching included — in the history



of baseball. Ohtani is both gifted and highly motivated. He's made a career out of doing things we've never seen before. And he's still only 30 years old.

No team has repeated as champions since the 2000 Yankees, and the Dodgers have never done it. So winning another title and being at full strength for October are certainly on Ohtani's to-do list. He'll have a new set of challenges this time, but when have those ever stopped him before?

THE YANKEES' PITCHING PIVOT

The Yankees wasted little time dwelling on the loss of slugger Juan Soto. Within a week, they had added a multi-time All-Star to the front of their rotation and the back of their bullpen, signaling a renewed emphasis on run prevention.

First, Max Fried left the Braves for an eight-year, \$218 million contract to be a left-handed complement to ace righty Gerrit Cole. Then the Yankees used their rotation depth to grab closer Devin Williams in a trade with the Brewers for Nestor Cortes and second baseman Caleb Durbin.

So the Yankees upgraded from Cortes to Fried in their rotation, and from Clay Holmes to Williams in the bullpen (Holmes signed with the Mets to be a starter). That's a significant improvement in both areas, and it should help give the Yankees an even better staff than the one with a 3.74 ERA (tied for sixth-best in MLB) in 2024.



Max Fried and Devin Williams

FROM TOP: JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA-IMAGN IMAGES; BRETT DAVIS-IMAGN IMAGES; BENNY SIEU-IMAGN IMAGES



SHUFFLING TO QUEENS

In his last six seasons with Atlanta, Fried was 40 games over .500 (71-31) with a 3.06 ERA. The only pitcher with more victories in that span was Cole, who was also the only pitcher with a better ERA (2.98) in as many innings as Fried.

Williams has been just as dominant in his role over those same six seasons. Among pitchers with 200 innings in that time, Williams is the only one with a sub-2.00 ERA, at 1.83. He's also allowed the fewest hits per nine innings (4.9) and is tied for third in strikeouts per nine (14.3).

The Yankees realized that no one player could replace Soto's offense. But they know that any Aaron Judge-led offense will hit fairly well — certainly well enough to win a lot of games with a pitching staff like this.

It's the contract heard 'round the sports world: **Juan Soto** to the Mets for 15 years and a record \$765 million. Soto, 26, earned the deal in December with seven sensational seasons for the Nationals, Padres and Yankees, displaying the kind of extraordinary patience and power rarely seen since Ted Williams.

He's already won a championship with Washington and led the Yankees to the World Series in his lone season in the Bronx. Now, the pressure's on Soto to take the Mets all the way — and not just once. Soto used the word "dynasty" at his introductory news conference at Citi Field, heady talk for a franchise that's won only two titles in 63 seasons and none since 1986.

It's a sign, perhaps, that Soto welcomes the huge expectations. In his Yankees cameo, he smoothly handled everything about New York — though it didn't hurt that a different player, Aaron Judge, was the established captain and superstar of the team. Francisco Lindor carries a similar reputation with the Mets, but the contract obviously thrusts Soto into a spotlight all his own.

A fast start will be imperative for Soto, if only to blunt any tedious narratives about the burden of the contract. His age and track record indicate that Soto has many years of prime, Hall of Fame-level production left. No matter the uniform, he always conducts a master class in performance art: the anticipation, the intensity, the shuffle, the swing.

Steve Cohen, the Mets' absurdly wealthy owner, is a noted art collector — and he's sharing his latest masterpiece with millions of fellow Mets fans. It's up to Soto to deliver.



PAUL IS LIVE



Some of the most encouraging words in the offseason came from Pittsburgh Pirates ace **Paul Skenes** after winning the NL Rookie of the Year award and finishing third in Cy Young voting. Asked by MLB Network Radio about his goals for 2025, Skenes said:

“The biggest thing is just pitching more. I was on six days this year and it was pretty much, ‘He’s gonna go out there and he’s gonna give you six innings, give up a couple runs and that’s just gonna be that.’ I’m hoping this year it’s gonna be go out every five days and it’s gonna be seven or eight (innings) and rely on that. There are some ways that I can do that, but that’s kind of the end goal that I’m looking at this year: being out on the mound more and being able to pitch more and really be a workhorse. Because now I know what it takes.”

More of Paul Skenes? Sign. Us. Up. The big righthander had a tantalizing debut in 2024, earning the start in the All-Star Game and finishing 11-3 with a 1.96 ERA and 170 strikeouts in 133 innings — a scintillating performance after a series of abbreviated starts in the minors that drew criticism and confusion from fans.

It turns out the Pirates may have known what they were doing. Between the majors, Triple-A, spring training and the All-Star Game, Skenes worked 164.1 innings in 2024 — not bad for a season in which only four major leaguers reached 200 innings. If Skenes gets his wish and has the chance to be a workhorse, he could join that group, too.

Consider that, in 23 starts with Pittsburgh, Skenes pitched beyond the sixth inning only five times. Seven times, he left after six innings without exceeding 100 pitches. Once he was pulled from a no-hitter after seven innings and 99 pitches. He’s not just dominant; he’s efficient, too.

The Skenes tribute mustaches on fans in the stands, the famous girlfriend (Livvy Dunne) cheering from the suite, the high-powered fastball and unhittable “splinker” baffling the poor hitters — yes, more of that, please. As much as possible, in fact. (Just keep the kid healthy.)

THE DODGERS' PITCHING PUZZLE

In 2015, when Andrew Friedman took over the Dodgers’ baseball operations, three L.A. pitchers worked 180 innings. In nine seasons since, just four have done it: two in 2019 and two in 2021. Last season, remarkably, the Dodgers won the World Series without anyone on their playoff roster who topped 90 innings for the team.

Clearly, Friedman believes in quality innings from a lot of pitchers over high quantities from a few — and he has the budget and player-development experts to pull it off. Which brings us to the 2025 staff, which could be the ultimate manifestation of that approach.

The Dodgers signed Blake Snell — a first-round pick from Friedman’s time in Tampa Bay — for five years and \$182 million. Snell has never pitched 185 innings in a

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: CHARLES LECLAIRE-USA TODAY SPORTS; CHARLES LECLAIRE-USA TODAY SPORTS; LON HORWEDEL-USA TODAY SPORTS

season and reached 180 only twice. Yet both times he did it, he won a Cy Young Award, and he cruised in the second half for the Giants last year with a 1.23 ERA in 14 starts. Expect the Dodgers to use Snell carefully, maximizing his impact with a minimal workload.

The same holds for other Dodgers veterans, who all dealt with injuries last season (and in 2023, in some cases): Clayton Kershaw, Shohei Ohtani, Yoshinobu Yamamoto, Tyler Glasnow, Tony Gonsolin and Dustin May. Add that group to younger pitchers like Ben Casparius, Bobby Miller, Emmett Sheehan, Justin Wroblewski and Gavin Stone, and it's a staggering abundance of talent. How the Dodgers deploy it all will be fascinating.



Andrew Friedman

STREAM WEAVER

It's important to watch how we watch. Local cable deals are no longer the revenue-generating monster they used to be, and MLB's national deals expire after the 2027 season. In the meantime, the league wants to take control of as many local media rights as possible by then.

The goal is to create national packages for major streaming companies to bid on for 2028 and beyond. And with the current collective bargaining agreement set to expire in December 2026, that sets up TV revenue as a major battleground issue.

At least half of MLB teams have experienced reduced media-rights fees over the past two years as more and more consumers drop cable. Diamond Sports Group, a regional sports broadcasting company that owned at least 10 teams' rights, underwent a bankruptcy restructuring in November that will bring more teams under MLB's umbrella.

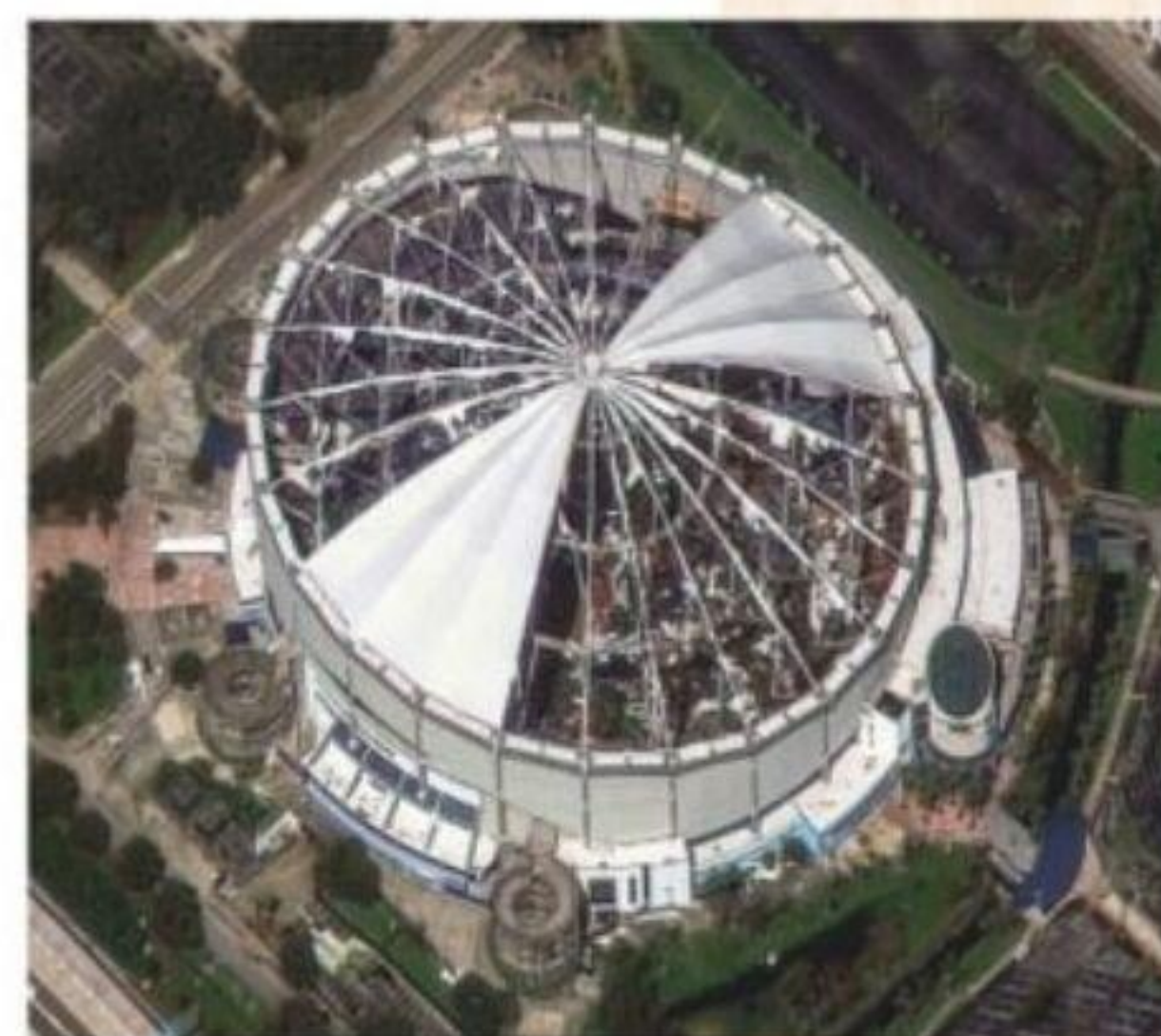
The upshot, for now, is that three of the teams returning to Diamond (under its rebranded FanDuel Sports Network name) will now offer in-market streaming rights for the first time: the Atlanta Braves, the Los Angeles Angels and the St. Louis Cardinals.

In-market streaming will reduce the dreaded blackouts that keep so many fans from tuning in to the games they want to see. But while eliminating all blackouts is the goal, it hasn't happened just yet. Every market has a different arrangement, which is why MLB wants to nationalize its streaming offerings.

The best advice for understanding your favorite team's TV situation? Remember those time-honored phrases: Check your local listings, and stay tuned.

PUTTING THE TAMPA IN TAMPA BAY

When Hurricane Milton ripped the roof off Tropicana Field in October, it forced the Rays from St. Petersburg to the other side of the Howard Frankland Bridge. Fans in Tampa have long insisted that commuting across the bay has kept them from buying Rays tickets, but now the team will play its 2025 home games at George M. Steinbrenner Field, the Yankees' spring training facility, which is located across the street from the Buccaneers' stadium.



Of course, while the location is theoretically better, the facility presents plenty of other issues, beyond the oddity of using a ballpark named for the former owner of a division rival. The capacity is just 11,026, and there's no roof, meaning inevitable rain delays and at least some games in the searing heat, even with a few adjustments from the original schedule to limit sweltering summer home dates.

Fortunately, the Yankees were already in the process of renovating the home clubhouse and the ballpark lighting. They'll need to make improvements to the visitors' side, but the facility has excellent indoor amenities for the teams to use during inclement weather.

The bigger issue to watch, long term, is where the Rays will play beyond 2025. They will need to replace the roof and fix the damage inside the Trop, but that's expected to cost more than \$55 million, with a lease expiring after the 2027 season. The hurricane has also complicated their plan for a proposed new ballpark in St. Petersburg, which the team had hoped would be ready for 2028.

CATCHING TROUT

We miss **Mike Trout**. In the last four seasons, the three-time MVP has played in just 266 of a possible 648 games. And when he has played, his production has steadily declined; by hitting only .220 in 29 games last season, he saw his career average dip under .300.

Decline is inevitable, but Trout turns 34 this August, and his mere presence would liven up the Angels, who have had nine consecutive sub-.500 seasons and set a franchise record for losses last season with 99. Their contract with Trout runs through 2030, and it's troubling to think that he hasn't played more than 140 games in a season since 2016.

Trout had two surgeries on his left knee last year, one in May to repair a meniscus tear and another to fix a new tear in August. He told reporters that he was open to moving out of center field to save some wear and tear.

"I knew when I signed my contract, I'd eventually move to a corner," Trout said in September. "But is it next year? I don't know. ... I think everything's on the table. Ultimately, my goal is to be in that batter's box, in the field every single day."

Trout has already done enough to assure his place in Cooperstown, but he needs to play more to reach memorable statistical benchmarks. He's 22 homers away from 400 and 46 runs batted in shy of 1,000, milestones he should easily achieve this season — as long as his body lets him.



THE BELTWAY: HOLLIDAY ROAD?

The Washington Nationals held a 10.2 percent chance to win the MLB draft lottery in December, but they beat the odds to come away with the top pick. That puts them in position to follow the team just up the road, the Baltimore Orioles, and draft a Holliday brother first overall.

Jackson Holliday went first to the O's in 2022 and made his debut last season, making 52 starts at second base and another at short, his natural position. He hit just .189 with a .565 OPS, but that's not alarming for a first partial season; Mike Trout batted just .220 with a .672 OPS at age 20, and Aaron Judge hit .179 with a .608 OPS at age 24.

The Orioles were pleased with Holliday's strides on defense, and while manager Brandon Hyde won't simply give him the second base job, he said this winter that Holliday, now 21, would "get every opportunity to get as many at-bats as possible." Given his production in the minors (.304 with a .928 OPS) and his pedigree as the son of a seven-time All-Star, he's worth watching.

So is Ethan Holliday, Matt Holliday's younger son. Ethan, who turns 18 in February, is 6-foot-4, like his dad (Jackson is four inches shorter), and is said to have an enticing left-handed power stroke. The Stillwater (Okla.) High School star projects as a third baseman in the majors and would be another standout prospect for a franchise that hopes to build around James Wood, Dylan Crews and Seaver King.

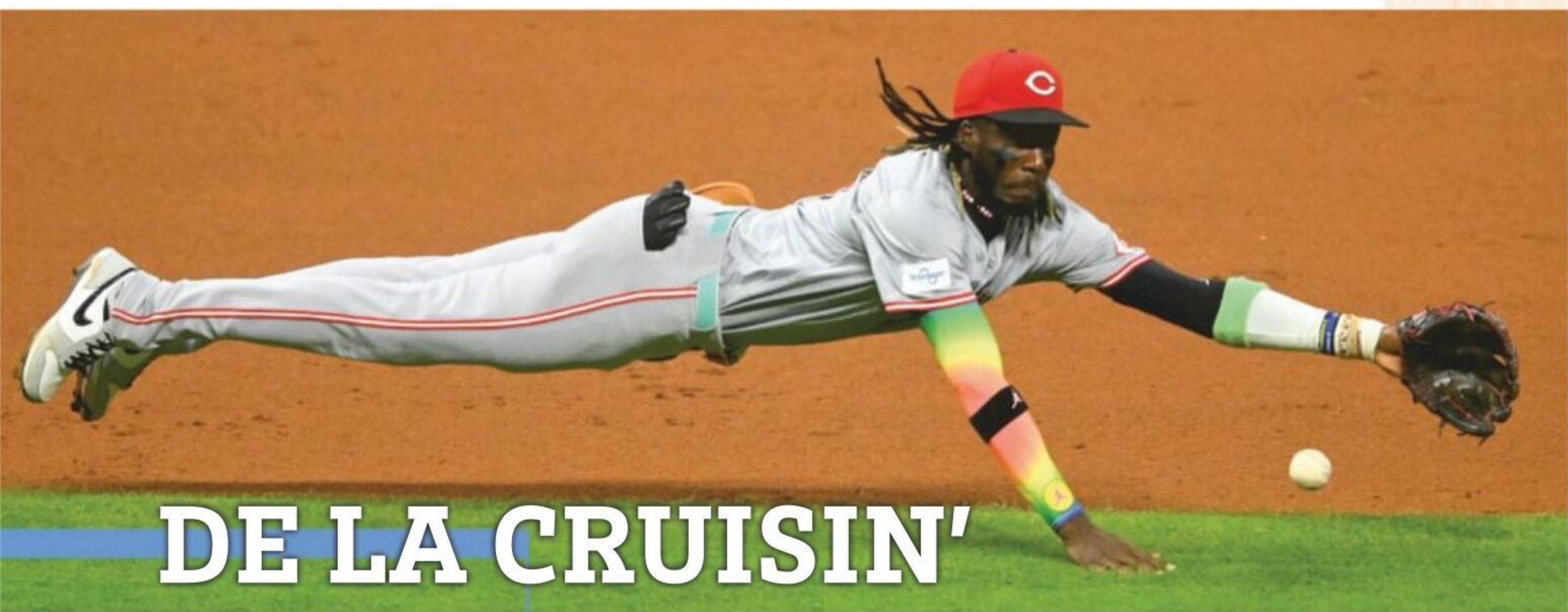
Washington has endured five consecutive losing seasons since winning the 2019 World Series, and Baltimore hasn't gotten there since 1983. If the Holliday boys help change that, maybe the family could build a compound on the banks of the Chesapeake or Potomac — they're going to earn a whole lot of money.



Jackson and Ethan Holliday



FROM TOP: JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA-USA TODAY SPORTS; GARY A. VASQUEZ-USA TODAY SPORTS; STEVE SISNEY-THE OKLAHOMAN



DE LA CRUISIN'

IT'S A's — JUST A's (OR ATHLETICS)

The A's have moved to Sacramento for a three-year stay before their new ballpark is ready in Las Vegas. And just to emphasize the temporary nature of the arrangement, they'll have no city or state designation. They're the A's or Athletics only, and they even offered their preferred scoreboard designation: ATH.

While we love those first three letters here at Athlon, it'll take some time to get used to the new style. And the players, of course, must get used to settling in for a while at a Triple-A stadium, Sutter Health Park. The team spent the offseason constructing a two-story facility beyond left field that would house locker rooms, training facilities, batting cages and dining areas that meet major league standards. The A's had planned to convert the field to artificial turf, hoping to ease the strain of hosting two teams at once (the Giants' Triple-A affiliate, the Sacramento River Cats, will continue to play there). But

Extremes are always fascinating, and nobody embodies that fact more than **Elly De La Cruz** of the Reds. He's the most aggressive base stealer in the majors, for better or worse: 67 steals, 16 times caught, both the most in MLB. He's the most aggressive swinger, too: 218 strikeouts, the most in the majors in eight years and just five shy of Mark Reynolds' single-season record.

At shortstop, De La Cruz led the majors in putouts, with 247, but also in errors, with 29. He finished fifth in the NL in extra-base hits (36 doubles, 10 triples, 25 homers), and he'll play this season at the ripe old age of 23.

So there's a lot to love about De La Cruz, a 6-foot-5 switch-hitter from the Dominican Republic, and a lot of room to grow. The hiring of Terry Francona as the Reds' new manager suggests that the team expects to win now, and the fans have waited long enough: Cincinnati has not finished higher than third place since 2012 and has not won a playoff series since 1995.

As their best and most visible position player, De La Cruz will be a focal point. He has to lower his strikeout rate and must improve as a right-handed hitter; his OPS was .661 from the right side but .876 from the left. Those adjustments will be hard, and making them is not inevitable.

But given his youth, talent and steady evolution through his six-year pro career, De La Cruz seems poised for an all-world season — the kind that is certain to command the attention of fans everywhere.

the players' union feared that an outdoor turf field would be too hot in Sacramento, where summer temperatures can reach 115 degrees, so grass will remain.

Even though it's a minor-league facility, the new arrangement will replace a couple of outdated features from the Oakland Coliseum, which had bullpens in play and was the only MLB park without dugout railings.

With a capacity of 14,014 — including the outfield berm area — the ballpark will be the second-smallest in the majors. But that shouldn't be much of a problem for the A's, who averaged just 11,528 fans per game in their last season in Oakland.



The Texas Rangers paid **Jacob deGrom** \$70 million across the last two seasons, which comes out to almost \$8 million per start. He picked up a World Series ring along the way, making six starts to begin the Rangers' 2023 championship season. Then came Tommy John surgery, which wiped out most of two years.

But deGrom made it back last September, working 10.2 innings in three starts, with typical results: two earned runs, one walk, 14 strikeouts.

DOUBLE FANTASY

It's hard enough to square up major league pitching. And now, when batters manage to do it, it's getting harder to collect the rewards.

Home runs are different; outfielders can't do much with a ball that clears the fence. But when those hard hits stay in play, outfielders are doing an exceptional job of catching them or cutting them off.

Consider the double. Last season, doubles dropped to 1.60 per team per game. That's the lowest for a full season since 1992, the year before MLB added a team in the offensive paradise of Denver. Last year alone, we saw just 7,771 doubles, compared to 8,228 in 2023 — meaning that 457 doubles simply disappeared from MLB parks.

All this has happened even without pitchers hitting, and without infielders stationed in the outfield anymore. It's a trend unlikely to change much, either. Teams, of course, use advanced statistical models to better predict where batted balls will go. Those aren't going away. And front offices have figured out the value of athleticism in the outfield. Data shows that average sprint speed has improved in the last decade at all three outfield spots.

It's generally not a place to stash a plodding slugger anymore — put that guy at DH and keep those extra-base hits from falling in. And while it's easy to lament the demise of the double, there's another way to frame the trend. As MLB.com's Mike Petriello put it, "What if we're living in the golden age of outfield defense?"



In his very small sample size, he's actually been even better for the Rangers than he was for the Mets, with a 2.41 ERA for Texas compared to 2.52 for New York.

That's encouraging for the pitcher with the best strikeout-to-walk ratio (5.41 to 1) in MLB history. And if you want to be really optimistic, you'll note that deGrom's precious arm has less wear and tear than most, having pitched only 265.1 innings over the last five years.

Then again, that's also the cause for concern: deGrom turns 37 in June and hasn't made 30 starts in a season since 2019, the end of a three-year run in which he averaged 207 innings with a 2.53 ERA and won two Cy Young Awards.

Will that be as good as it gets? The Rangers have three more years invested in deGrom, who signed a five-year, \$185 million contract after the 2022 season. And as we saw last season with Chris Sale — also tall, skinny and injury-prone — it is possible for a mid-30s pitcher to rediscover his inner ace after years of physical problems.

It's hard to expect deGrom to do the same thing. But there's precedent in his track record and in Sale's example, and we'll be tuning in — because deGrom at his best is a joy to watch.

FROM TOP: STEPHEN BRASHEAR-IMAGN IMAGES; ERIK WILLIAMS-USA TODAY SPORTS

STARRY SEASON DOWN SOUTH

The All-Star Game finally returns to Atlanta in July, after MLB moved the 2021 game to Colorado over objections to new Georgia voting laws. The All-Stars will be wearing their regular-season uniforms, too, reviving a tradition that Nike spent several years trashing with generic All-Star unis that got uglier every year.

But while we know that the Braves will host at least one night of superstars, they'd love to do it a lot more often. They opened last season with the reigning unanimous NL MVP, **Ronald Acuña Jr.**, in their lineup and the reigning MLB strikeout king, Spencer Strider, atop their rotation. But Strider tore his UCL in April, and Acuña tore his left ACL in May.

The Braves expect both players back within the first two months of the season, so here's hoping they meet that timeline. If and when they do, we'll be eager to see how closely they resemble the players we remember.

Strider averaged 97.2 mph with his fastball in 2023, when he led the majors with 20 wins to go with his 281 strikeouts. He had Tommy John surgery at Clemson in 2019 and the less-invasive internal brace surgery last April. After two major operations, will he need to adjust his style to keep from getting hurt again?

As for Acuña, he's now had both ACLs repaired. He tore the right one in 2021, and after a middling 2022 season, he proved in 2023 that he could be better than ever, authoring the first 40-homer, 70-steal season in history. Will he still be as bold on the bases now? And will the Braves need to wait another year to see him at his best?

If Strider and Acuña are both back and producing by the time the All-Stars come to town, the Braves could very well reclaim their hold on the NL East.



ICHIRO'S FOREVER HOME

It's safe to say that no player in recent memory has shown as much reverence for baseball history as **Ichiro Suzuki**. He's made at least seven trips to Cooperstown, which isn't exactly convenient to his main baseball address, Seattle, or to his native Japan.

"I don't like to visit places," Suzuki told The Athletic's Ken Rosenthal last year. "Out of anywhere in the world, besides the places I've lived, Cooperstown is the place I've visited the most."

Now that it's been five full seasons since Suzuki's last game, he's set to take the stage in Cooperstown on induction day July 27. The record estimated crowd for an induction ceremony was 82,000 in 2007, when Cal Ripken Jr. and Tony Gwynn went in. Could this year set a new standard?

That's asking a lot; Baltimore fans, after all, had a relatively manageable drive to see Ripken in 2007. But a new record might be possible, considering the fervor for baseball in Japan and the intense national pride in Suzuki becoming the first Japanese player in the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

Whatever the crowd size, it will be touching to see how much the induction means to Suzuki, who had 3,089 MLB hits while winning 10 Gold Gloves and making 10 All-Star teams for the Mariners. His speech promises to be one of the most memorable in the rich history of the Hall.



A full-page photograph of Shohei Ohtani in a Los Angeles Dodgers uniform. He is wearing a white jersey with "Dodgers" in blue script, a blue cap with "LA", and white batting gloves. He has a surprised or excited expression with his mouth open. The background is a solid brown color.

GREATEST SHO ON EARTH

After making history with his 50-50 season, Shohei Ohtani will showcase his two-way talents once again in 2025

BY RYAN FAGAN

Shohei Ohtani did not pitch in 2024.

You know this, of course. But it's OK to admit that you occasionally forgot about his elite pitching prowess as he turned in one of the greatest offensive seasons in the history of baseball. Not only did he become the first player ever to hit at least 50 homers and steal at least 50 bases in a season — he was one swipe shy of going 50-60 — but he also helped lead his new team, the Los Angeles Dodgers, to the World Series title and was unanimously voted as the National League's Most Valuable Player.

“Obviously, my goal was to be able to pitch and contribute offensively,” Ohtani said in a conference call after winning the MVP, through interpreter Matt Hidaka. “The fact that I knew I wasn’t going to be able to pitch this season just made me focus more on my offensive game.”

Well, it worked. Even now, months later, it’s mind-boggling to think about all he accomplished while only having access to roughly half of his immense skill set.

Imagine, for a moment, that for one NBA season Steph Curry was only allowed to shoot within six inches of the 3-point arc but not any deeper. Or how about Lamar Jackson only being able to pass the football but not elude hapless defenders with his elite running ability? What if Tiger Woods wasn’t able to use his driver off the tee during his Peak Tiger era? Or what if Wayne Gretzky could only pass the hockey puck to his teammates but wasn’t allowed to shoot on goal?

Certainly, they all still would have been great. Elite athletes always find a way.

But historic? Nah.

That was, essentially, Ohtani during the 2024 baseball season, his first after signing a record-setting \$700 million free-agent contract with the Dodgers. After elbow surgery in September 2023, the most successful two-way player in MLB history — sorry, Babe Ruth, it’s been true for a while now — wasn’t able to pitch in 2024. All he did was go out and win his third MVP award in four years, this time without his two-way talents.

“People were like, ‘But Shohei pitches, so he’s got the two MVPs because he pitches and he hits and that’s why he wins,’” former MLB All-Star and longtime MLB Network analyst Harold Reynolds says. “But this last year, I think he said, ‘I want to show everyone I can win an MVP just as a hitter.’”

Reynolds can’t help but laugh.

“Let’s not forget how we got to the number of \$700 million,” he says. “You have to pay this guy as two premium players, not just one.

You’re talking about a guy that can win a Cy Young and a guy that can win an MVP.”

At many points during Ohtani’s incredible 2024 season, Reynolds found himself thinking back to spring training when he visited Dodgers camp at Camelback Ranch-Glendale for an MLB Network sit-down interview with Ohtani, Mookie Betts and Freddie Freeman.

“We were talking off-camera about how he was excited to see how good a hitter he could become because of all the experience he had as a pitcher,” Reynolds says, before pausing.

“He just thinks differently.”



**YOU’RE TALKING ABOUT A GUY THAT CAN WIN A CY YOUNG
AND A GUY THAT CAN WIN AN MVP.**

— HAROLD REYNOLDS

That almost makes a person wonder: What could a healthy Ohtani do if he bagged his bats and just focused on pitching for a full season? That scenario is unlikely ever to happen, of course, because he loves to hit — and, well, the Dodgers are paying for his bat to be in the lineup — and it’s hard to imagine a scenario where an injury would allow him to pitch but prevent him from hitting. But just for the record, only two pitchers have won an MVP award in the 2000s: Justin Verlander in 2011 and Clayton Kershaw in 2014.

Ohtani is coming off his second major surgery on his pitching elbow — he had Tommy John surgery in October 2018 — so there is a reason to temper the optimism. But Ohtani successfully threw a very public 10-pitch bullpen session in late August, and there were reports that he was already throwing in the low-90s in September.

The Dodgers have already said they’re going to be extremely cautious with Ohtani’s return to the mound — especially after an unrelated surgery on his left shoulder to repair an injury that happened during the World Series — with the goal of having him healthy and fully ramped up for the stretch drive and postseason. That means he won’t be pitching in the 2025 season-opening series in Japan, where the Dodgers and Cubs face off for two games, on March 18-19.

“The goal is to be ready for Opening Day, and that includes hitting and pitching, but we are kind of taking our time,” Ohtani said during the MVP conference call. “I obviously want to make sure that I’m healthy first. We’re not going to rush anything. Especially with my shoulder, we are going to, again, take

a little bit more time and be conservative and make sure that I'm fully healthy before I step back on the mound."

When that happens, expect Ohtani to remind everyone what he is as a pitcher.

"I've had some real great conversations getting to know him over the past seven years, and I'll always ask, 'Has being a pitcher made you a better hitter?' And he always says, 'No doubt,'" Reynolds says. "Shohei has an advantage that other pitchers don't have, especially now with the DH. They don't understand how hard it is to hit, and he has figured that out. Like, 'I'm not going to hit this fastball down and away, so good luck. You're not going to hit it, either.'"

By the Baseball-Reference calculation, only five pitchers — Zack Wheeler, Gerrit Cole, Sandy Alcántara, Max Scherzer and Logan Webb — produced a better cumulative WAR from 2021 to 2023 than Ohtani's 14.2. He finished fourth in the 2022 AL Cy Young vote — with a 2.33 ERA and 219 strikeouts in 166 innings — and was tracking toward another top-five finish in 2023 when he suffered a UCL tear during his August 23 start against Cincinnati. He hadn't allowed an earned run in his previous 21.2 innings when he hit the injured list.

Once in a while, it's fun to say an Ohtani fact out loud just to remember how ridiculous he really is.

Say this with me: In 2024, the guy who finished fourth in the 2022 AL Cy Young race became the first hitter in baseball history to steal at least 50 bases and hit at least 50 home runs in the same season.

How about this: On one magic day in 2024, the guy who who struck out a league-leading 11.9 batters per nine innings in 2022 went 6-for-6 at the plate with three home runs, two doubles — one that missed being a homer by about a foot — 10 RBIs and two stolen bases.

Or this: The right-handed pitcher who threw a one-hit shutout in Game 1 of a doubleheader against the Tigers on July 27, 2023, is the same left-handed hitter who popped two home runs in the second game.

Ludicrous, isn't it?

And this generational freak of baseball nature is getting ready to step back on the mound to create more insane factoids. One person in particular who can't wait for his return is Rob Friedman, the creator of the immensely popular PitchingNinja social media accounts, which have hundreds of thousand followers across multiple platforms.

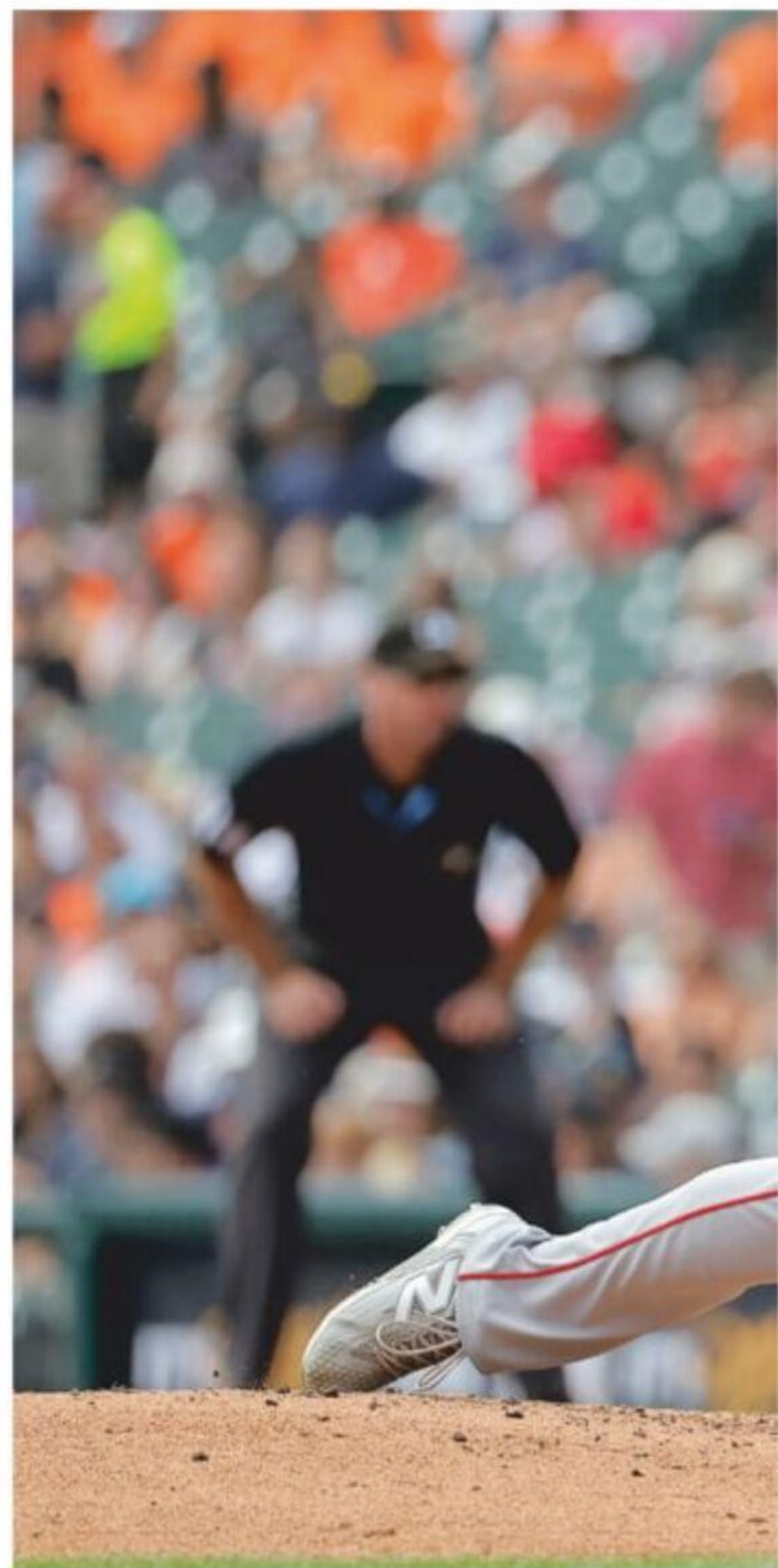
"Posting Ohtani [pitching] highlights was the biggest thing I missed about 2024," Friedman says. "It's not only his stuff but also his personality and mannerisms on the bump. Literally, every time he pitched, I dropped everything to watch him because his stuff is so filthy. He's definitely must-watch baseball. His return is the No. 1 thing I'm looking most forward to in 2025."

Friedman says that the engagement with Ohtani clips was at least three times what other pitchers would generate. "There's honestly no one close to Ohtani," he says. "Every night he pitched was 'Ohtani Night' on social media, both in the US and in Japan. Probably 15 percent of my followers are from Japan, and it becomes a huge party every time he pitches."

It's Ohtani's ability to make opposing hitters look silly that really resonates.

"Dude is a video game character on the mound," Friedman says. "His stuff is ridiculous. From his 100 mph fastball to his sweeper that can break nearly two feet and his splitter that's one of the best pitches in baseball, it's jaw-dropping. He also added an upper-90s sinker that's a legit weapon as well."

Speaking of filthy pitches, who can ever forget the way Ohtani closed out Japan's title-game victory against the United States in the 2023 World Baseball Classic? He was on the mound with Japan up, 3-2, in the ninth inning. With two outs, his Angels teammate Mike Trout — a future first-ballot Hall of Famer — stepped to the plate. Ohtani started him with a sharp slider just out of the zone that Trout somehow laid off, then pumped in four consecutive fastballs in the 100 mph range, two of which Trout swung right through. Properly set up, Trout whiffed at the full-count pitch, an 87-mph slider that seemed to break



about 12 feet as it swept across the plate. To nobody's surprise, that was voted as the PitchingNinja pitch of the year.

And it's the memory of that pitch that has Dodgers fans and baseball fanatics excited.

The challenge for any athlete who produces an epic season is this: What do they do for an encore? How could Aaron Judge possibly follow his 62-homer season? Ronald Acuña Jr. faced that in 2024 after his 40-70 season. Trying to one-up history isn't an easy challenge.

For Ohtani, the answer is simple: He's going back to the mound, and he's almost certainly going to have a chance to throw pitches that matter for the first time in an MLB uniform.

His Angels teams were consis-



LITERALLY, EVERY TIME HE PITCHED, I DROPPED EVERYTHING TO WATCH HIM BECAUSE HIS STUFF IS SO FILTHY.

— ROB FRIEDMAN

tently pitifully inept, despite having both Ohtani and Trout on the roster. They never finished better than third in the AL West — and the year they finished third, they were 33 games out of first place — and the one time it looked like they might contend for a wild-card spot, they completely fell apart down the stretch. The Angels were 56-51 at the end of July 2023 but went 17-38 the rest of the way. Yikes.

But the 2025 Dodgers will make the playoffs; there's little doubt about that. And Reynolds has no doubt that Ohtani will rise to the October occasion when he's on the postseason mound.

"I've been around enough greatness, guys like Ken Griffey Jr. and others, when they set their sights on something, they're gonna do it," Reynolds says. "I love Ohtani. I've never seen anything like him. We will never see anything like this guy. He's got the mindset of a Michael Jordan. He's got the charisma. He's got a Muhammad Ali-type following. Say what you want, but he's the most popular player on the planet. I don't want to hear about Lionel Messi and all these other people. A whole country watches every game he plays."

Reynolds has been a believer in the idea of Ohtani as a two-way player from the moment he arrived at Angels camp for spring training in 2018. Not

everyone in his fraternity of former players was convinced right away, though.

"It took time. I don't think anybody likes to come right out and say, 'This guy's better than anybody I ever played against,'" he says. "It's been funny watching comments through the years, how they've changed. If you remember when he pitched in New York a couple times early on, he got lit up and the New York narrative was, 'Oh, he doesn't have the heart! He's not a competitor!' That's gone. And everyone would say, 'He can't do both. No way, never going to work.' That was the biggest thing of all, all the ex-pitchers, talking about what you've got to do to come back to be ready to make a start, how your body is sore, how he can't do it."

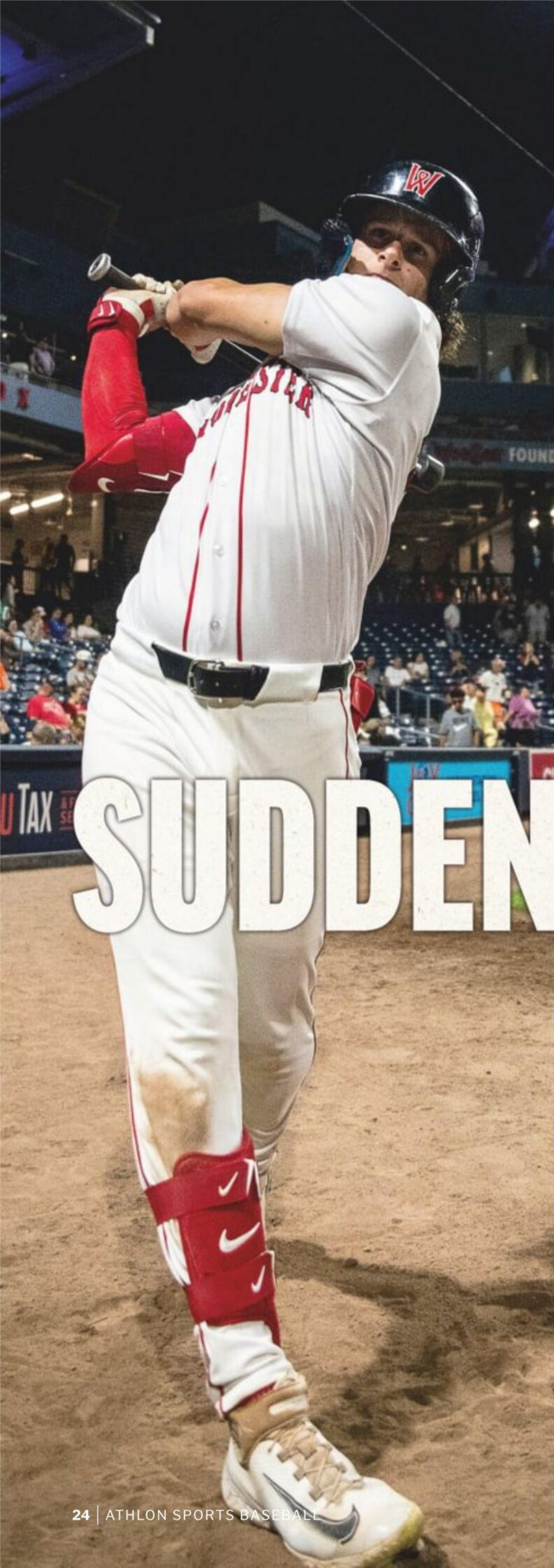
For his first couple of seasons, the Angels didn't put Ohtani in the lineup at DH the day after he pitched. But starting with the 2021 season — after he was fully back from late-2018 Tommy John surgery — Angels manager Joe Maddon and general manager Perry Minasian gave him the green light to play every day, either as a starting pitcher or as a DH. It's no coincidence that 2021, the first year Ohtani was allowed to be fully Ohtani, was his first MVP campaign.

"I think we all owe Joe Maddon some gratitude here because Joe Maddon took the governors off Ohtani," Reynolds says. "Maddon said, 'He's going to DH after he pitches, and if he wants to hit while he's pitching, he's doing that.' Maddon changed the direction of the whole sport."

In 2025, you can bet that Ohtani is ready to remind everyone that he's not just a hitter.

"It always bugged me that fans and media debated at the end of last year whether he should just drop pitching and become a full-time hitter," Friedman says. "I was like, 'Y'all must've forgot.' He's legit one of the best pitchers in MLB. I can't wait to watch him in 2025."

And PitchingNinja is far from the only one.



Paul Skenes was transcendent as a rookie for the Pirates in 2024. The No. 1 overall pick in the 2023 MLB Draft made wily veterans and rising young superstars look equally silly at the plate, contrasting his incendiary fastball with an explosive slider and a pitch that he made famous — the splinker, a combo splitter and sinker.

But the big righthander was nowhere to be found in October. The other Pirates, as you probably know, were not very good, and the only impact Skenes made on the playoff race was when he faced one of the teams vying for a spot in October. This wasn't Skenes' fault, of course, but it was disappointing for fans of the sport.

What wasn't disappointing was the performance of rookies who forced their way into their contending club's equation and showed that they were ready to thrive in the heart of a playoff race. Jackson Chourio struggled out of the gate, but the Brewers stuck with him, and he posted an .883 OPS in the final four months of the season and helped Milwaukee run away with the NL Central. Then, he popped two opposite-field homers in the Wild Card Series against the Mets and looked like a future MVP candidate.

And in San Diego, 20-year-old Jackson Merrill earned the starting center field job — despite being a lifelong shortstop — from Opening Day, and he made a habit of delivering clutch late-inning home runs to fuel the Padres' run to the NL's top wild-card spot.

SUDDEN IMPACT

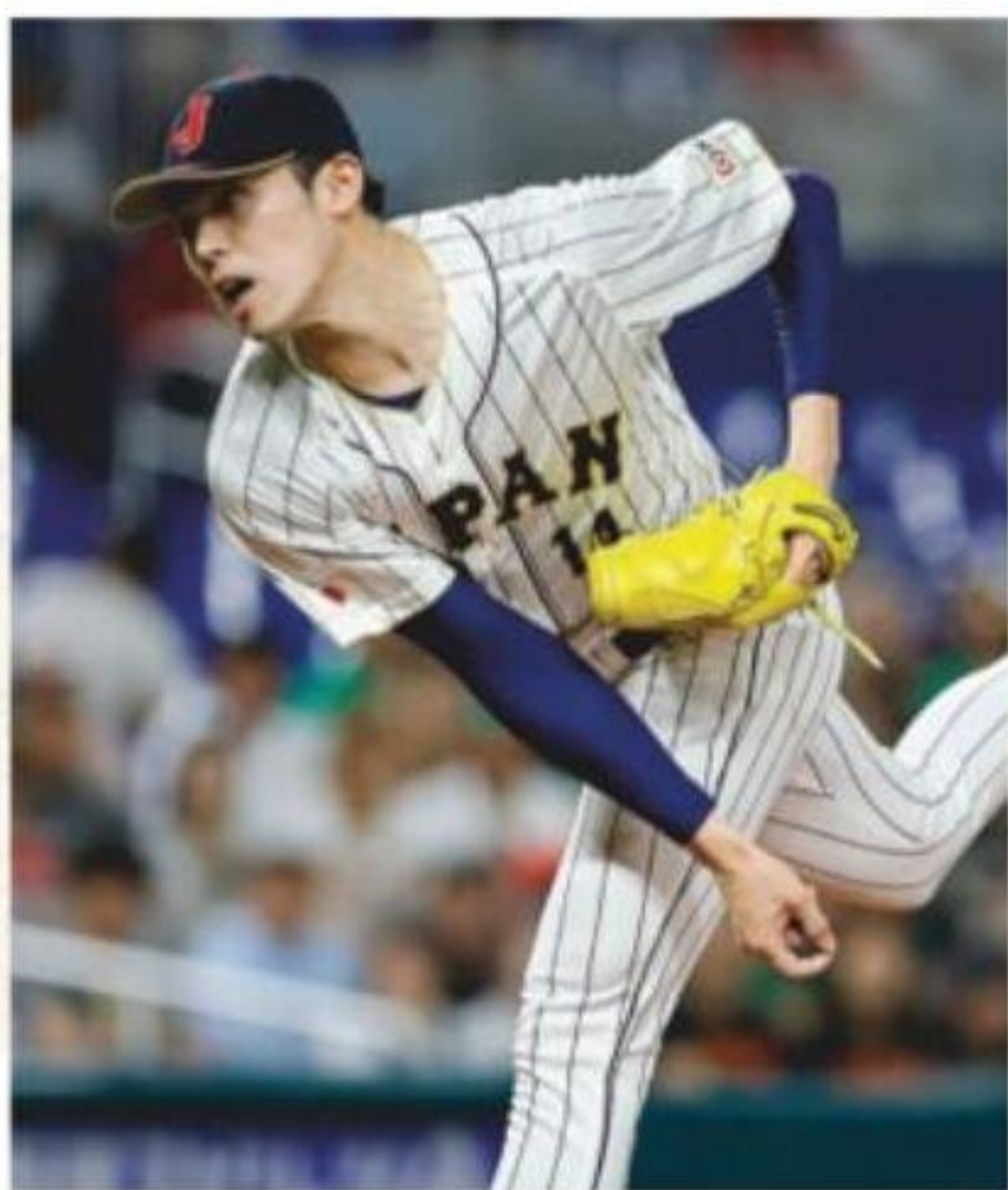
10 ROOKIES WHO COULD BE MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS COME PLAYOFF TIME

BY RYAN FAGAN

The Brewers and Padres needed their best prospects to deliver in a big way on the biggest stage, and that's exactly what they did. With that in mind, we're going to take a look at 10 rookies in 2025 who could similarly reward their teams' faith in them along the way to the postseason. These rookies might not — for some, definitely will not — be on the big-league rosters by Opening Day, but they will make an impact on the playoff race when the second-half/stretch run playoff-type atmosphere pressure is highest.

We recruited two of the best prospect evaluators in the business — Jim Callis of MLB.com and Eric Longenhagen of FanGraphs — to add their expertise to the conversation.

WOOSOX PHOTO/ASHLEY GREEN



ROKI SASAKI, RHP

Even before Sasaki struck out 11 batters in 7.2 innings for Team Japan in the 2023 World Baseball Classic, MLB teams had been dreaming of the day — or dreading it, depending on their perspective — when he would leave Japan and sign with an MLB squad. Not many people thought it would happen this soon, but Chiba Lotte posted Sasaki in December at just 23 years old (Shohei Ohtani was also 23 when he joined the Angels for the 2018 season.) In his four years at Japanese baseball's highest level, the right-handed Sasaki posted a 2.02 ERA with 11.4 strikeouts per nine innings, contrasted with just 6.0 hits and 2.0 walks per nine.

"It's the combination of the fastball and the slider and the splitter," Callis says. "They're all legitimate weapons. You can't go up there looking for or protecting against a particular pitch because he will just make you look bad with the other two."

One thing Callis is curious to see is Sasaki's workload. His year-by-year innings totals in Japan: 83.1, 129.1, 91 and 111.

"He got handled very, very carefully in Japan," Callis says. "I think the only question is how many innings you can get out of him. I don't know that you can have him pitch every five days. But maybe that's not a big deal because we're in a kind of a different era for starters anyway."

Regardless, expect to see Sasaki handled in a way that puts him on the mound when it matters most.



ANDREW PAINTER, RHP | PHILLIES

The Phillies, as an organization, have only one primary goal for the 2025 season: Win the World Series. And Painter is the type of impact pitcher with the ability to make an October difference.

"There's something about Painter that is [Justin] Verlander-y," Longenhagen says. "He's got that size, and the way his stuff wants to play with elevated fastballs, breaking balls in the zone off of that, and then a second breaking ball generating chase, that's in the Verlander area."

Painter was originally supposed to make an impact for the 2023 season, but he hurt his elbow during spring training and needed Tommy John surgery. With a couple of setbacks and an abundance of caution, Painter didn't make his post-TJ competition debut until the 2024 Arizona Fall League. He looked incredible, winning the AFL's Pitcher of the Year award and kicking the Philly hype machine back into overdrive.

"He was pretty much the same guy, 97 to 99 mph, tough angle plus breaking stuff, a slider at 86 to 90 and curveball at 81 to 84 and a growing feel for locating those two as the fall went along," says Longenhagen, who watched multiple Painter starts.

The team has already indicated that Painter will not make his MLB debut until later in the summer. Caution is a reason, sure, but you can bet the Phillies would rather use Painter's potentially dominating innings in September and October than May and June.



MATT SHAW, INF | CUBS

The Cubs have missed the playoffs each of the past four seasons, and the Wrigley Field faithful are starting to become restless. The front office, aware of the growing animosity, made an impactful move early in the offseason, landing perennial All-Star outfielder Kyle Tucker in a deal with the Astros that had a potentially massive secondary benefit, too. By sending third baseman Isaac Paredes to Houston, the club cleared a cluttered path to the bigs for Shaw, the 13th overall pick in the 2023 MLB Draft who raked at Double-A and Triple-A last summer.

"He's just a very, very advanced hitter," Callis says. "I think he's gonna hit for average. I think he's gonna hit probably around 20 homers a year. He's got some quickness to him. He can steal some bases. He controls the strike zone. I think he's going to contribute across the board offensively."

In 121 minor-league games last year — 86 at Double-A, 35 at Triple-A — Shaw posted an .867 OPS, with 21 homers, 31 stolen bases and a healthy .379 on-base percentage. His rate stats, across the board, were better at the higher level.

Longenhagen is excited to watch Shaw seize the opportunity.

"I'm in. He's a top-30 prospect," Longenhagen says. "He does everything. He's super funky and weird. His swing is kinda like a turbo-charged Sal Bando. He has a closed stride, low hands. It's pretty unique. He's a lot of fun."



BRANDON SPROAT, RHP | METS

The New York Sotos — er, Mets — have World Series aspirations, but the NL East just might be the most top-heavy division in baseball. The Mets are undoubtedly going to need rotation reinforcements along the way to compete for the division title, and Longenhagen sees Sproat as a perfect internal candidate for important second-half innings, despite atypical mechanics for a starter.

“I think some of our previous scout tropes and notions about what starters look like mechanically have been broken by guys like Chris Sale and Tanner Houck, and that’s Sproat,” Longenhagen says. “At a certain point, even though this guy has a delivery that looks like most relievers have historically, he’s thrown strikes and has plus-fastball utility and has maintained premium velocity over a starter’s workload, and he’s done it for two or three years now.”

The righthander finished the 2024 season as Longenhagen’s No. 17 prospect in baseball. Sproat’s heavy sinker is what really stands out as a difference-maker to Longenhagen.

“I love that his sinker gives him a way of being more efficient than his command would,” Longenhagen says. “He’s not a surgeon, but you bully somebody with mid- to upper-90s sinkers, and you’re gonna get double plays that make you more efficient despite some walks. This is absolutely a guy I would expect to be a big part of the Mets rotation this year, an impact mid-rotation guy.”

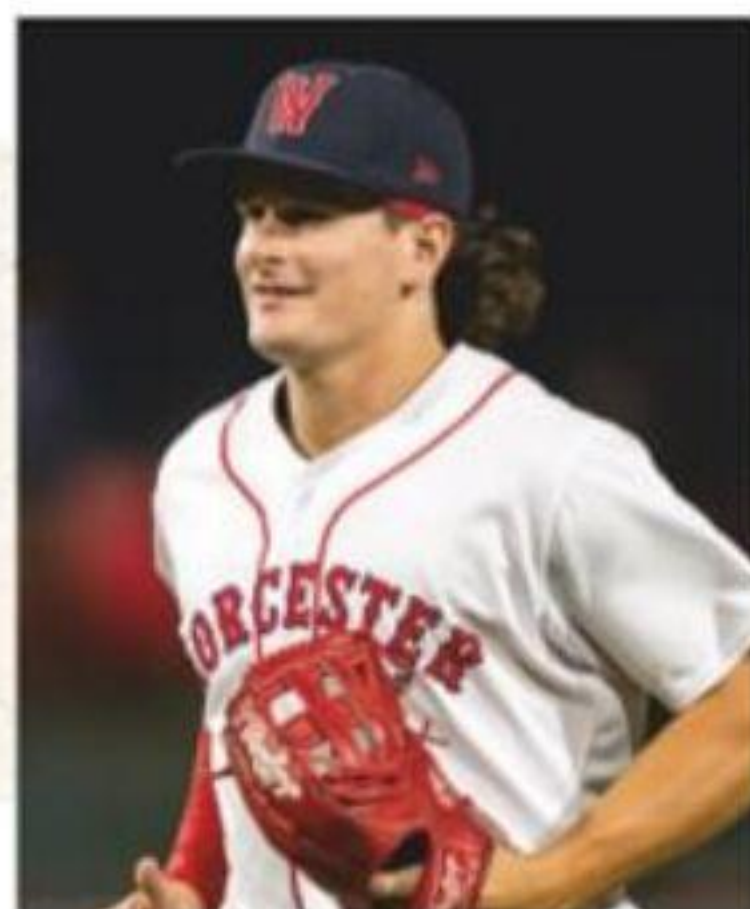
ROMAN ANTHONY, OF | RED SOX

Like Shaw, Anthony took his offensive game up a notch when he was promoted from Double-A to Triple-A last summer — in 35 games for Worcester, Anthony batted .344 with a .463 on-base percentage. He finished the season with 18 homers, 21 stolen bases and an .894 OPS in 119 games at Double-A and Triple-A.

“The combination of good swing decisions and the ability to impact the ball at a high level, there aren’t many guys in baseball who can do that like he can,” Callis says. “I think he’s a little bit better athletically than people realize. He may have a chance to play center field.”

Anthony finished the season ranked No. 3 on MLB.com’s Top 100 prospects list. Callis can’t help but notice some similarities when evaluating Anthony’s game.

“When I’m thinking about this year’s rookie crop, he kind of reminds me of Jackson Merrill a little bit,” Callis says. “He’s got more outfield experience than Merrill did — I don’t think Merrill gets enough credit for basically learning a new position on the fly at the big-league level, on a team that was expected to win — but I think Anthony’s offensive upside is huge because he makes good swing decisions, and he hits the ball very hard.”



COBY MAYO, 3B | ORIOLES

Forget just making an impact on the playoff race — Callis tabs Mayo as his AL Rookie of the Year favorite (pending Roki Sasaki joining an AL team).

“It’s his power,” Callis says. “I’ll be curious to see if he winds up at third base or first base in the long run. He’s got an incredibly strong arm at third. But the biggest thing is that he just has a ton of power.”

Mayo, a fourth-rounder in the 2020 MLB Draft out of high school, hit 22 homers in 89 games for Triple-A Norfolk last summer with a .926 OPS, and he got the call to the big leagues in early August. He was often overmatched, but Callis is undaunted.

“Like Jackson Holliday, he got a taste for the big leagues last year, and hopefully that’ll show that he needs to make adjustments,” Callis says. “He struggled, like a lot of rookies do, but getting that taste of the big leagues showed him firsthand what he’ll need to do for 2025.”

JACOB MELTON, OF | ASTROS

Remember how the Tucker trade opened a path for Shaw in Chicago? The same deal created a similar opportunity in Houston, this one in the outfield for Jacob Melton, with Tucker now patrolling the open spaces at Wrigley Field.

“Just going through data for guys from 2023 under the surface that is very impressive and well-rounded, especially contact rates and power — exit velocities — that are both comfortably plus, Jacob Melton is one of those guys,” Longenhagen says.

Melton, a second-rounder in 2022, was part of a loaded Oregon State team

FROM LEFT: CYNDI CHAMBERS/GAINESVILLE SUN; WOOSOX PHOTO/ASHLEY GREEN; KIM KLEMENT NEITZEL-USA TODAY SPORTS; ANGELA PIAZZA/CALLER-TIMES

along with Travis Bazzana — the No. 1 overall pick in the 2024 MLB Draft — and Wade Meckler, who made his MLB debut with the Giants in 2024. Melton has played primarily center field in the Astros' organization, though he's patrolled both corner spots, too.

"He's a lefty power-hitting outfielder who's sort of a tweener on defense, but the way he's performed on offense is such that even if he's a corner outfielder, he's probably an everyday guy," Longenhagen says. "There is elevated chase, but there's plus measurable power, a high max exit velocity, a hard-hit rate approaching 48 to 50 percent with average contact data. With plus power and average contact data, it kind of doesn't matter if you can play center field or not. He's gonna hit enough to be an everyday outfielder of some kind. He's a windmill slam top-100 prospect and a dark horse Rookie of the Year candidate."



JACKSON JOBE, RHP | TIGERS

Any doubts as to how highly the Tigers regard their prized pitching prospect — he's Longenhagen's top pitching prospect in baseball — were erased when the club gave Jobe not one, but two playoff opportunities last October despite only four big-league innings under his belt during the regular season.

Jobe was the No. 3 overall pick in the 2021 MLB Draft out of high school in Oklahoma City, and what's impressed Longenhagen is the repertoire adjustments he's made in the development-focused years since he was a top selection.

"His pitch mix has completely changed," he says. "In high school, it was, 'Wow, look at this guy's curveball!' He doesn't even have that pitch anymore. He has four plus pitches, and aside from his fastball, none of them are why he was drafted as high he was."

It reminds Longenhagen of Skenes, who threw almost exclusively four-seam fastballs and sliders at LSU, with an occasional changeup mixed in just to be mean to overmatched hitters. During his breakthrough rookie campaign, Skenes threw six pitches, adding that devastating splinker, a curveball and a sweeper.

"For both Skenes and Jobe, there were very early changes made to what they were doing that have borne real fruit," Longenhagen says. "Instead of Jobe having a curveball, they gave him a slider and a cutter. He's made a significant transition and still is excellent in basically every way."

JASSON DOMÍNGUEZ, OF | YANKEES

With Juan Soto now playing for New York's other team, could 2025 be the year of Domínguez? At some point, he should get an opportunity.

"He's interesting because I never know what to make of him, to be honest. He's the most hyped international amateur player ever. He's got out-of-this-world tools," Callis says. "But then the pandemic delayed his debut, and his performance has been up and down in the minors. In '23, he got off to a slow start, and I was kind of down on him. We revised our Top 100 prospect season list midseason and moved him down, and then he just went off, homered off Justin Verlander in his first big-league game, had four homers in eight games, and then he blew out his elbow. He came back last year and played pretty well in

the minors and didn't get a chance in the big leagues."

In 58 minor-league games last year, the switch-hitting Domínguez batted a robust .314 with an .880 OPS and 11 home runs. He also stole 16 bases and was caught just once. Questions about his defense kept him from getting starts down the stretch and in September.

"Nothing would surprise me," Callis says with a laugh. "If you tell me he'll win Rookie of the Year, I would say, 'Sure I could see that.' And if you told me he'd struggle and the Yankees didn't give him at-bats, I'd say, 'I could see that, too.'"

CHASE DELAUTER, OF | GUARDIANS

Cleveland hasn't had an over-abundance of offense since the days of Jim Thome, Albert Belle and Manny Ramirez with Kenny Lofton in the leadoff spot, so it makes sense that potential thumper DeLauter will get an opportunity to make an impact for the Guardians in 2024.

"DeLauter's swing is weird. It doesn't look like any other swings you've ever seen, but this guy's swing works for this guy," Longenhagen says. "He has always performed when he's been healthy, and he has the talent to anchor a lineup in the heart of someone's order."

The biggest question for Longenhagen and other evaluators has been DeLauter's injury issues with his feet and ankles — concerning for a 235-pound outfielder. The No. 16 overall pick in the 2022 MLB Draft played only 57 regular-season games in 2023 and just 39 in 2024. DeLauter probably won't be up early, though he has the type of bat capable of making a playoff impact.

"Having watched him for the better part of each of the last two fall leagues — again, because he's just been hurt so much that he's been in each of the last two fall leagues, and he was only playing a couple times a week this year to take some of the burden off his feet — you can see he's unbelievably strong," Longenhagen says. "It's just about keeping him healthy."



AMERICAN LEAGUE PREDICTIONS

AL EAST

1. NEW YORK YANKEES
2. BALTIMORE ORIOLES*
3. BOSTON RED SOX
4. TAMPA BAY RAYS
5. TORONTO BLUE JAYS

AL CENTRAL

1. KANSAS CITY ROYALS
2. DETROIT TIGERS*
3. MINNESOTA TWINS
4. CLEVELAND GUARDIANS
5. CHICAGO WHITE SOX

AL WEST

1. HOUSTON ASTROS
2. TEXAS RANGERS*
3. SEATTLE MARINERS
4. ATHLETICS
5. LOS ANGELES ANGELS

*WILD CARD

ALCS

YANKEES OVER ORIOLES



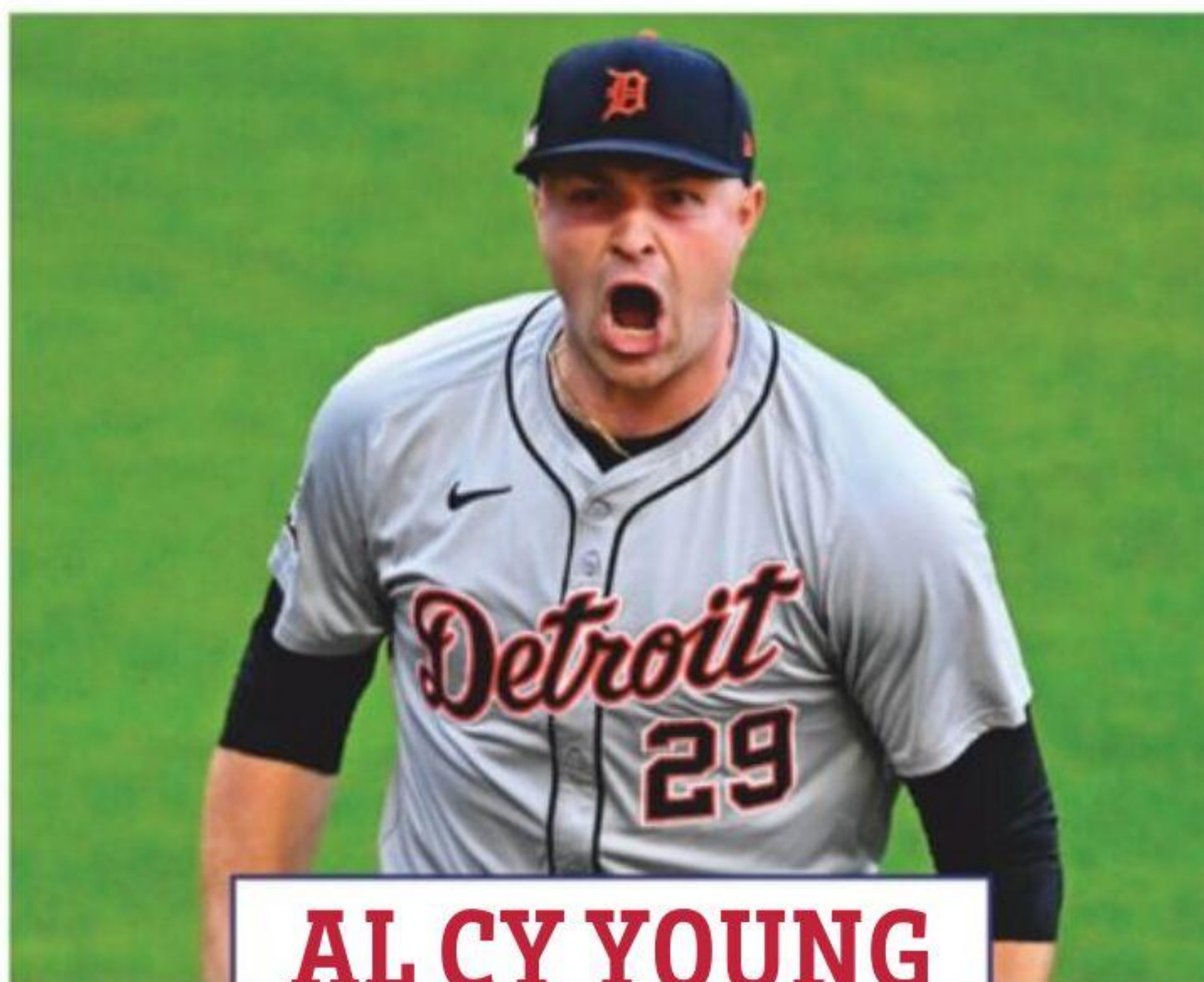
WORLD SERIES

DODGERS OVER YANKEES



AL MVP

1. BOBBY WITT JR., SS, KANSAS CITY ROYALS
2. AARON JUDGE, OF, NEW YORK YANKEES
3. GUNNAR HENDERSON, SS, BALTIMORE ORIOLES
4. YORDAN ALVAREZ, OF, HOUSTON ASTROS
5. COREY SEAGER, SS, TEXAS RANGERS



AL CY YOUNG

1. TARIK SKUBAL, LHP, DETROIT TIGERS
2. GERRIT COLE, RHP, NEW YORK YANKEES
3. GARRETT CROCHET, LHP, BOSTON RED SOX
4. COLE RAGANS, LHP, KANSAS CITY ROYALS
5. JACOB DeGROM, RHP, TEXAS RANGERS

AL ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

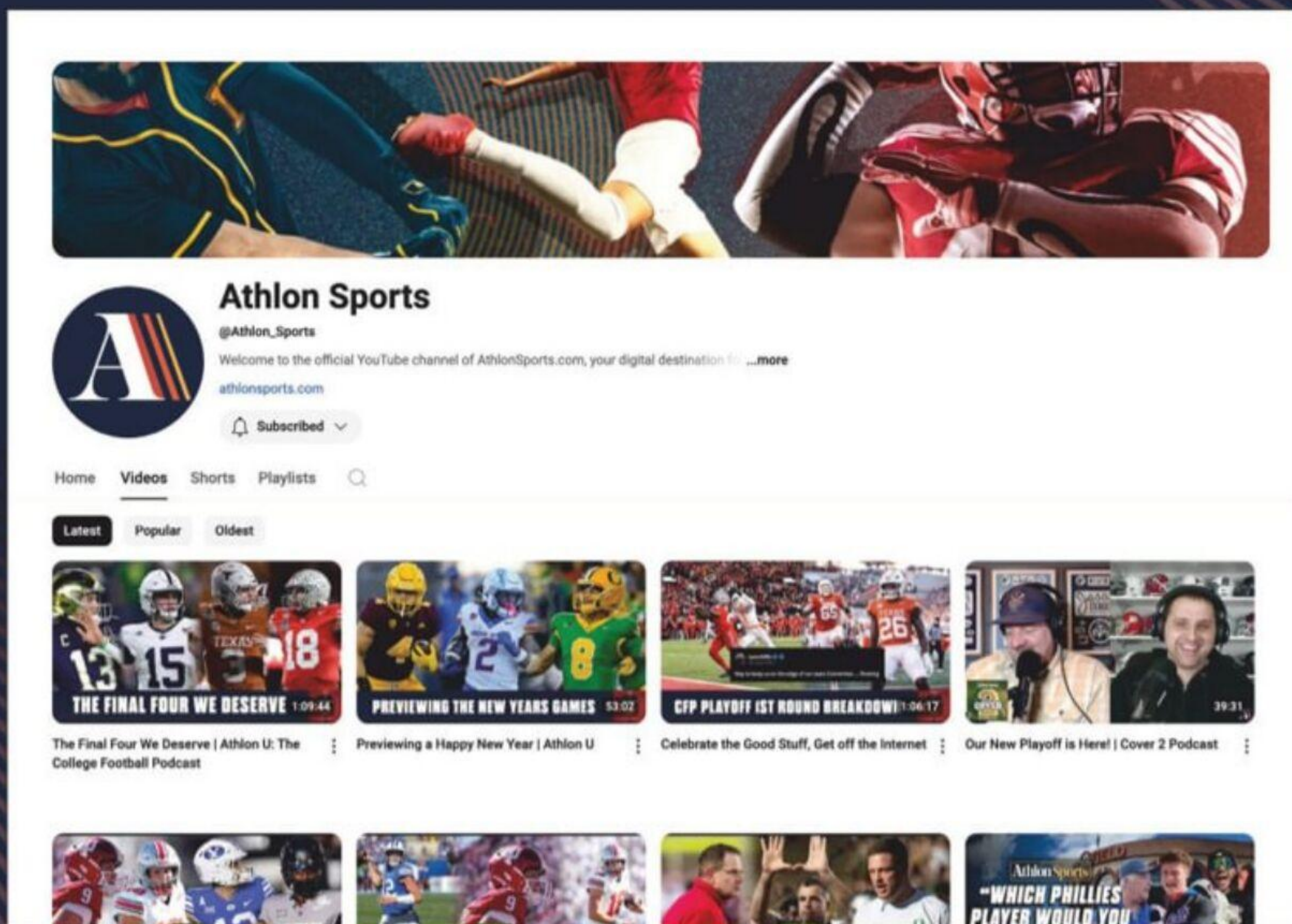
1. JASSON DOMÍNGUEZ, OF, NEW YORK YANKEES
2. COBY MAYO, 3B/1B, BALTIMORE ORIOLES
3. JACKSON JOBE, RHP, DETROIT TIGERS
4. JACOB WILSON, SS, ATHLETICS
5. ROMAN ANTHONY, OF, BOSTON RED SOX

FROM TOP: JAY BIGGERSTAFF-IMAGN IMAGES; DAVID RICHARD-IMAGN IMAGES



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Baltimore ORIOLES

2025 PREDICTION

2ND

AL EAST

2024 FINISH: 2ND (91-71)

Simply making the playoffs is no longer acceptable in Baltimore after the Orioles emerged from an ugly rebuild. They were swept in their last two postseason rounds, and having the talent to try again doesn't ensure better results. The good news, though, is that they will be in the running for a division title.

The offense took a nosedive in the second half, but a collective slump doesn't figure to carry over to 2025, especially with Gunnar Henderson, Adley Rutschman and Rookie of the Year runner-up Colton Cowser in the lineup. The rotation should get a full season out of Zach Eflin, acquired from the Rays at the trade deadline, and Grayson Rodriguez, who didn't pitch after July 31 due to a strained lat muscle. All-Star closer Félix Bautista returns from Tommy John surgery. This team is capable of a much deeper run, health permitting

ROTATION

No. 1 starter Corbin Burnes hit the free-agent market and landed in Arizona. However, Eflin and Rodriguez are legitimate candidates to start on Opening Day; decorated Japanese right-hander Tomoyuki Sugano, a control artist, signed for \$13 million; and 41-year-old Charlie Morton signed for \$15 million to strengthen the back end. Eflin posted a 2.60 ERA in nine starts after the Orioles acquired him, and he has the same aversion to walks as Sugano. Rodriguez has ace stuff but hasn't stayed healthy. Dean Kremer is developing a reputation for strong second-half performances, posting a 3.82 ERA after the break last season, 2.25 in September. There's depth with Albert Suárez and lefthanders Cade Povich and Trevor Rogers, the latter trying to rebound from four poor outings after the deadline trade with the Marlins that cost Connor Norby and Kyle Stowers. Prospect Chayce McDermott made one start last season, and Brandon Young, the organization's Minor League Pitcher of the Year, could make his debut. Most importantly, Kyle Bradish and Tyler Wells are expected back in the second half after undergoing elbow reconstructive surgery.

BULLPEN

The Orioles get back Bautista, who hasn't pitched since August 2023, two months before his Tommy John surgery. He won't be rushed back, but caution should wane as he proves that he's healthy. Seranthony Domínguez, acquired from the Phillies at the trade deadline, had 10 saves with the Orioles and can back up Bautista. So can veteran righthander Andrew Kittredge, signed for \$9 million with a \$9 million buyout in 2026. He had a career-high 74 appearances with the Cardinals last season. The unit also has Yennier Cano, an All-Star setup man in 2023 with some closing experience. Lefthanders Gregory Soto, Keegan Akin and Cionel Pérez return, but the Orioles declined southpaw Danny Coulombe's \$4 million option. He looks like a significant loss. Suárez bounced back and forth last year between the rotation and the pen and can consume innings.

MIDDLE INFIELD

Former top prospects Henderson and Jackson Holliday are the main starters at shortstop and second base, respectively. Henderson was a unanimous choice as AL Rookie of the Year in 2023 and finished fourth in MVP voting last season.



Gunnar Henderson

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5-Year Win Trend



Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Fewest single-season times grounded into a double play, 1995-2024 (not counting 2020)

1. 2024 Orioles	71
2. 2021 Rays	75
3. 2021 Braves	81
4. 2011 Diamondbacks	82
4. 2011 Mariners	82

MITCH STRINGER-IMAGN IMAGES

Holliday, the first overall pick in the 2022 draft, struggled in the majors at age 20 but is expected to be much better with experience and an adjustment in his approach at the plate, removing the leg kick in favor of a toe tap. The Orioles also have Jordan Westburg, Jorge Mateo and Ramón Urías as options at second base and short. The infield is the most set position on the roster.

CORNERS

Westburg should get most of his starts at third base. He gives the Orioles quality at-bats and hits the ball to all fields and with power. First base can be shared again by Ryan Mountcastle and Ryan O'Hearn. Mountcastle is the superior defender, a two-time Gold Glove finalist with power from the right side. O'Hearn offers a contrast

from the left side, and the Orioles think he's worth the \$8 million option that they exercised. Backup catcher Gary Sánchez also can play first base. The wild card is elite prospect Coby Mayo, who struggled in his first exposure to the majors. His future might be at first base.

OUTFIELD

Anthony Santander and his 44 home runs entered free agency, leaving a hole in the middle of the order, but the Orioles signed Tyler O'Neill for \$49.5 million

over three seasons. O'Neill hit 31 homers with the Red Sox last year and gets on base more frequently but went on the injured list three times in 2024 to raise his career total to 15 trips. Cowser, who led AL rookies with 24 homers, is the primary left fielder but can play anywhere in the outfield. He can handle the tricky dimensions in left better than anyone, which makes him an ideal replacement for Austin Hays. Speedster Cedric Mullins stays in center after the Orioles tendered him a contract. He's no longer the leadoff hitter but can be dangerous in the bottom third of the order. Heston Kjerstad, the second overall pick in the 2020 draft, should get a lot more at-bats as a corner outfielder/designated hitter and avoid the Triple-A shuttle. It's his time to live up to the draft status.

CATCHING

Rutschman was an All-Star again, but he needs to bounce back this season. He couldn't shake a slump in the second half, batting .207/.282/.303 with only three home runs in 58 games. It dragged down his final slash line to .250/.318/.391 in 148 games. Rutschman kept insisting that he was healthy, but the numbers



Jackson Holliday and Colton Cowser

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

SS	Gunnar Henderson (L)
C	Adley Rutschman (S)
RF	Tyler O'Neill (R)
LF	Colton Cowser (L)
1B	Ryan Mountcastle (R)
DH	Ryan O'Hearn (L)
3B	Jordan Westburg (R)
CF	Cedric Mullins (L)
2B	Jackson Holliday (L)

■ BENCH

C	Gary Sánchez (R)
INF	Jorge Mateo (R)
INF	Ramón Urías (R)
OF	Heston Kjerstad (L)

■ ROTATION

RHP	Zach Eflin
RHP	Grayson Rodriguez
RHP	Charlie Morton
RHP	Dean Kremer
RHP	Tomoyuki Sugano

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Félix Bautista (C)
RHP	Yennier Cano
RHP	Seranthony Domínguez
LHP	Cionel Pérez
LHP	Gregory Soto
LHP	Keegan Akin
RHP	Andrew Kittredge
RHP	Albert Suárez

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE ORIOLES "I'm still bullish on the Orioles. There's an awful lot to like. Their starting pitching is gonna be better than people think because Grayson Rodriguez is ready to be an ace. With him and Zach Eflin and Dean Kremer, that's a really good top three, and maybe they'll fix Trevor Rogers. Tomoyuki Sugano is a worthwhile gamble; he's 35 and not a power pitcher, but the hitters won't know him, and his track record suggests that he's a crafty guy who knows what he's doing. I thought Tyler O'Neill and Gary Sánchez were great signings; they haven't had a ton of right-handed power the last couple of years, but with the left field wall coming in and those guys used in the right spots, that will change. Adley Rutschman struggled for the first time, maybe in his life, but he'll learn from that and he's poised to get better. Jordan Westburg is gonna be a beast, Colton Cowser's entering his prime and Gunnar Henderson is an MVP candidate. They'll challenge for the East title again and push all-in at the deadline when they know what they need."

presented a counter argument. James McCann is gone, and the Orioles signed veteran Sánchez to an \$8.5 million contract to provide more pop from the right side. His defense grades below average but not as bad as his Yankees days, when he led the league in passed balls multiple times. Samuel Basallo, the organization's No. 1 prospect, could make his debut this summer. He turns 21 in August.

DH/BENCH

The Orioles basically have two utility infielders with Urías and the lightning-fast Mateo. Urías can play anywhere in the infield and was their hottest hitter before spraining his ankle on Aug. 31. Mateo backs up at second base, shortstop and third, and he can serve as an extra outfielder if the Orioles carry seven infielders as expected. Sánchez will catch, play first base and DH at times against lefthanders. Kjerstad, who has displayed big-time power in the minors, should be the fourth outfielder. He isn't as strong defensively as the other outfielders and could get bulk at-bats as the DH. O'Hearn is the backup first baseman and occasional DH who also can play the corner outfield.

MANAGEMENT

The new ownership group headed by billionaire David Rubenstein has excited a fanbase that always groused about the Angelos family and its reluctance to spend, although there are no assurances that the payroll will skyrocket under Rubenstein. The Orioles won't enter territory occupied by the likes of the Dodgers, Yankees and Mets, but they are better equipped to take on large contracts. Executive vice president/general manager Mike Elias created a top-notch farm system and analytics department, and his methods got the Orioles back into the postseason in 2023 and '24. Now he needs to push them further than first-round sweeps.

FINAL ANALYSIS

The Orioles are built to win, and they have more talent on the way. Better health and fewer slumps could get them back atop the division, where they finished in 2023. Their rotation going into the new year fell short of the Yankees' starters, which is an issue. The unit will look much better when Bradish and Wells return, providing a big push down the stretch. The first World Series since 1983 is possible if everything falls right for a change.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

NEW DIMENSIONS The Orioles are moving in their left field fence after pushing it back prior to the 2022 season. Some areas will be pulled in as much as 20 feet and others a maximum of nine. The wall will be lowered from 13 to eight feet. Initial renovations moved back the wall 30 feet and raised it about eight, making it easier to convince pitchers to sign with the Orioles but frustrating hitters. Executive vice president/general manager Mike Elias said the club "overcorrected" it.

COMING BACK Tyler Wells was one of three Orioles pitchers who underwent reconstructive elbow surgery in 2024, including John Means, who became a free agent. Wells could return before Kyle Bradish because he didn't have the typical Tommy John procedure. He underwent a revision ulnar collateral ligament surgery with a UCL repair and internal brace augmentation on June 17, which normally has a shorter recovery time.

DELAYED RETURN Albert Suárez wasn't a finalist for Comeback Player of the Year in the American League, but no one else had such a large gap between appearances in the majors. Suárez hadn't pitched in the majors since 2017 with the Giants, with his career taking him to Japan and Korea. He didn't make the club out of spring training but joined in April and was a valuable contributor to an injury-ravaged pitching staff. He made 24 starts and eight relief appearances and posted a 3.70 ERA.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27	28	29
				TOR	TOR	TOR
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
TOR	BOS		BOS	BOS	KC	KC
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
KC	ARI	ARI	ARI		TOR	TOR
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
TOR		CLE	CLE	CLE	CIN	CIN
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
CIN		WAS	WAS	WAS	DET	DET
27	28	29	30			
DET	NYN	NYN	NYN			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
					KC	KC
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
KC		MIN	MIN	MIN	LAA	LAA
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
LAA		MIN	MIN	MIN	WAS	WAS
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
WAS	MIL	MIL	MIL	BOS	BOS	BOS
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
BOS	STL	STL	STL		CWS	CWS
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CWS		SEA	SEA	SEA	A's	A's
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
A's		DET	DET	DET	LAA	LAA
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
LAA	TB	TB	TB	TB	NYN	NYN
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
NYN	TEX	TEX	TEX		TB	TB
29	30					
TB	TEX					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		TEX	TEX		ATL	ATL
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
ATL		NYM	NYM	NYM	MIA	MIA
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
MIA		ALL-STAR BREAK			TB	TB
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
TB	CLE	CLE	CLE	CLE	COL	COL
27	28	29	30	31		
COL	TOR	TOR	TOR			
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
					CHC	CHC
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
CHC	PHI	PHI	PHI		A's	A's
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
A's		SEA	SEA	SEA	HOU	HOU
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
HOU	BOS	BOS		HOU	HOU	HOU
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
HOU	BOS	BOS	BOS	BOS	SF	SF
31						
SF						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	SD	SD	SD		LAD	LAD
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
LAD		PIT	PIT	PIT	TOR	TOR
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
TOR	CWS	CWS	CWS		NYN	NYN
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
NYN		TB	TB	TB	NYN	NYN
28	29	30				
NYN						

STATISTICIAN

0-10 The Orioles' playoff record since the start of the 2014 American League Championship Series.

1 The number of runs the Orioles scored in the two-game 2024 Wild Card series against the Royals.

.500 Orioles' winning percentage after the 2024 All-Star break (33-33).

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Samuel Basallo, C (20)** Hit 19 homers in 127 games at two levels in 2024.

■ **2. Coby Mayo, INF (23)** Questions about his defense at third could push power hitter to first.

■ **3. Vance Honeycutt, OF (21)** Toolsy player simply needs to cut his high strikeout rate.

■ **4. Enrique Bradfield Jr., OF (23)** Blazing speed produced 74 SBs in '24 at High-A and Double-A.

■ **5. Chayce McDermott, RHP (26)** Averages 13.0 strikeouts per nine innings in the minors.

■ **6. Dylan Beavers, OF (23)** Had 15 home runs, 31 steals at Double-A Bowie.

■ **7. Griff O'Ferrall, SS (22)** Limited power but good bat-to-ball skills and gets on base.

■ **8. Stiven Martinez, OF (17)** International signing has good power and a plus arm.

■ **9. Luis De León, LHP (21)** Has a mid-to-upper 90s fastball; changeup and slider are improving.

■ **10. Jud Fabian, OF (24)** Hit a combined 20 home runs in Double-A and Triple-A.

Orioles Roster

Executive Vice President and General Manager: Mike Elias • Manager: Brandon Hyde • Coaches: Grant Anders (major league development), Cody Asche (hitting), Buck Britton (major league), Robinson Chirinos (bench), Tim Cossins (field coordinator/catching instructor), Drew French (pitching), Sherman Johnson (asst. hitting/upper level hitting coordinator), Tommy Joseph (asst. hitting), Ryan Klimek (pitching strategy), Tony Mansolino (third base), Mitch Plassmeyer (asst. pitching), Anthony Sanders (first base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
45	Keegan Akin	L-L	6-0	240	4/1/95	BALTIMORE	3-1	3.32	66	0	1	78.2	55	19	97	
43	Bryan Baker	R-R	6-6	235	12/2/94	BALTIMORE	1-1	5.01	19	0	0	23.1	20	7	23	
						Norfolk (AAA)	2-1	5.17	32	0	6	31.1	24	16	43	
74	Félix Bautista	R-R	6-8	285	6/20/95	INJURED — Missed Season										
38	Kyle Bradish	R-R	6-3	215	9/12/96	BALTIMORE	2-0	2.75	8	8	0	39.1	27	15	53	
						Norfolk (AAA)	1-0	5.40	2	2	0	8.1	11	4	10	
						Bowie (AA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	3.0	1	0	4	
78	Yennier Cano	R-R	6-4	245	3/9/94	BALTIMORE	4-3	3.15	70	0	5	60.0	54	24	65	
56	Seranthony Domínguez	R-R	6-1	225	11/25/94	BALTIMORE	0-2	3.97	25	0	10	22.2	20	9	28	
						PHILADELPHIA	3-2	4.75	38	0	1	36.0	32	12	40	
24	Zach Eflin	R-R	6-6	220	4/8/94	BALTIMORE	5-2	2.60	9	9	0	55.1	51	11	47	
						TAMPA BAY	5-7	4.09	19	19	0	110.0	115	13	87	
	Luis González	L-L	6-2	170	1/17/92	Norfolk (AAA)	5-3	4.50	44	0	2	60.0	54	12	71	
	Andrew Kittredge	R-R	6-1	230	3/17/90	ST. LOUIS	5-5	2.80	74	0	1	70.2	60	20	67	
64	Dean Kremer	R-R	6-2	210	1/7/96	BALTIMORE	8-10	4.10	24	24	0	129.2	110	51	123	
						Norfolk (AAA)	0-1	11.42	3	3	0	8.2	15	4	9	
60	Chayce McDermott	L-R	6-3	197	8/22/98	BALTIMORE	0-0	6.75	1	1	0	4.0	5	2	3	
						Norfolk (AAA)	4-5	3.78	22	21	0	100.0	81	60	144	
	Charlie Morton	R-R	6-5	215	11/12/83	ATLANTA	8-10	4.19	30	30	0	165.1	154	65	167	
58	Cionel Pérez	R-L	6-0	175	4/21/96	BALTIMORE	2-0	4.53	62	0	2	53.2	47	28	46	
						Norfolk (AAA)	0-1	3.86	2	0	0	2.1	3	1	1	
37	Cade Povich	L-L	6-3	185	4/12/00	BALTIMORE	3-9	5.20	16	16	0	79.2	80	34	69	
						Norfolk (AAA)	6-1	3.48	15	14	0	77.2	59	27	89	
30	Grayson Rodriguez	L-R	6-5	230	11/16/99	BALTIMORE	13-4	3.86	20	20	0	116.2	109	36	130	
28	Trevor Rogers	L-L	6-5	217	11/13/97	BALTIMORE	0-2	7.11	4	4	0	19.0	25	10	12	
						Norfolk (AAA)	1-2	5.65	5	5	0	28.2	26	9	30	
						MIAMI	2-9	4.53	21	21	0	105.1	115	46	85	
60	Colin Selby	R-R	6-2	220	10/24/97	BALTIMORE	0-0	0.00	3	0	0	4.0	1	2	5	
						Norfolk (AAA)	0-1	4.24	18	0	4	17.0	15	8	26	
						KANSAS CITY	0-0	6.00	2	0	0	3.0	2	2	0	
						Omaha (AAA)	2-2	5.85	18	0	0	20.0	16	8	26	
						Indianapolis (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	2.0	1	3	2	
65	Gregory Soto	L-L	6-1	234	2/11/95	BALTIMORE	1-1	5.09	23	0	0	17.2	20	7	21	
						PHILADELPHIA	2-4	4.08	43	0	2	35.1	36	20	44	
	Kade Strowd	R-R	6-2	200	9/17/97	Norfolk (AAA)	4-2	6.80	37	0	0	41.0	49	27	60	
						Bowie (AA)	2-1	0.00	9	0	0	10.1	4	1	11	
49	Albert Suárez	R-R	6-3	235	10/8/89	BALTIMORE	9-7	3.70	32	24	0	133.2	130	43	108	
						Norfolk (AAA)	1-1	5.87	3	1	0	15.1	19	1	17	
	Tomoyuki Sugano	R-R	6-1	198	10/11/89	Yomiuri (Japan)	15-3	1.67	24	NA	0	156.2	132	16	111	
68	Tyler Wells	R-R	6-8	260	8/26/94	BALTIMORE	0-2	5.87	3	3	0	15.1	18	3	13	
	Brandon Young	R-R	6-6	210	8/19/98	Norfolk (AAA)	5-4	3.44	20	18	0	89.0	81	33	96	
						Bowie (AA)	0-2	4.09	7	6	0	22.0	21	4	36	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
81	Blake Hunt	R-R	6-4	215	11/10/98	Norfolk (AAA)	.179	42	151	11	27	3	7	7	50	1
						Aberdeen (A+)	.231	4	13	2	3	0	1	1	4	0
						Tacoma (AAA)	.293	24	75	15	22	4	20	6	10	0
	René Pinto	R-R	5-10	195	11/2/96	TAMPA BAY	.214	19	42	5	9	2	6	4	18	0
						Durham (AAA)	.191	53	209	29	40	11	31	16	84	0
35	Adley Rutschman	S-R	6-2	230	2/6/98	BALTIMORE	.250	148	571	68	143	19	79	58	103	1
	Gary Sánchez	R-R	6-2	258	12/2/92	MILWAUKEE	.220	89	245	30	54	11	37	27	76	0
						Nashville (AAA)	.167	2	6	1	1	0	0	1	2	0
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
2	Gunnar Henderson	L-R	6-3	220	6/29/01	BALTIMORE	.281	159	630	118	177	37	92	78	159	21
7	Jackson Holliday	L-R	6-0	185	12/4/03	BALTIMORE	.189	60	190	28	36	5	23	15	69	4
						Norfolk (AAA)	.271	73	266	75	72	10	38	75	77	8
3	Jorge Mateo	R-R	6-1	200	6/23/95	BALTIMORE	.229	68	192	30	44	5	18	10	48	13
16	Coby Mayo	R-R	6-5	230	12/10/01	BALTIMORE	.098	17	41	4	4	0	0	4	22	0
						Norfolk (AAA)	.287	89	345	61	99	22	67	40	97	4
						Aberdeen (A+)	.462	4	13	4	6	3	6	2	5	0
6	Ryan Mountcastle	R-R	6-4	220	2/18/97	BALTIMORE	.271	124	473	54	128	13	63	27	114	3
						Norfolk (AAA)	.091	3	11	0	1	0	0	0	6	0
32	Ryan O'Hearn	L-L	6-3	220	7/26/93	BALTIMORE	.264	142	443	60	117	15	59	46	69	3
26	Emmanuel Rivera	R-R	6-2	225	6/29/96	BALTIMORE	.313	27	64	9	20	4	14	6	18	0
						MIAMI	.214	97	201	15	43	1	15	20	51	2
73	Livan Soto	L-R	5-10	160	6/22/00	BALTIMORE	.300	12	10	1	3	0	0	3	2	0
						Norfolk (AAA)	.325	12	40	3	13	1	5	3	4	0
						CINCINNATI	.000	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
						Louisville (AAA)	.283	67	247	24	70	3	34	38	53	3
						Salt Lake (AAA)	.214	9	28	2	6	0	3	5	5	1
29	Ramón Uriás	R-R	5-10	185	6/3/94	BALTIMORE	.254	100	272	39	69	11	37	23	55	1
						Norfolk (AAA)	.333	3	9	1	3	1	3	0	4	0
11	Jordan Westburg	R-R	6-2	210	2/18/99	BALTIMORE	.264	107	416	57	110	18	63	22	97	6
						Norfolk (AAA)	.400	3	10	4	4	1	2	1	1	0
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Daz Cameron	R-R	6-0	185	1/15/97	OAKLAND	.200	66	170	22	34	5	15	13	51	5
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.307	41	137	32	42	6	27	27	35	8
17	Colton Cowser	L-R	6-2	220	3/20/00	BALTIMORE	.242	153	499	77	121	24	69	52	172	9
13	Heston Kjerstad	L-R	6-3	205	2/12/99	BALTIMORE	.253	39	99	8	25	4	14	10	33	1
						Norfolk (AAA)	.300	56	213	49	64	16	58	32	67	2
						Bowie (AA)	.308	4	13	1	4	0	3	2	1	0
						Aberdeen (A+)	.400	2	5	1	2	0	0	1	0	0
31	Cedric Mullins	L-L	5-9	175	10/1/94	BALTIMORE	.234	147	444	69	104	18	54	41	98	32
	Tyler O'Neill	R-R	5-11	200	6/22/95	BOSTON	.241	113	411	74	99	31	61	53	159	4
						Worcester (AAA)	.000	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0

2025 PREDICTION
3RD
 AL EAST
 2024 FINISH: 3RD (81-81)

The exasperating rebuild is over. After five years of ownership-mandated retrenchment that resulted in both a restocked farm system and a resentful fan base, the Red Sox are finally ready to make their move. They swung a blockbuster deal with the Chicago White Sox for burgeoning ace Garrett Crochet, and their most coveted prospects are on the verge of arrival. It's long overdue that the Sox act like a big-market team again, and if owner John Henry aggressively pursues in-season improvements, they should compete in a wide-open American League East.

ROTATION

Tanner Houck made his first All-Star team, and fellow righthanders Brayan Bello and Kutter Crawford established themselves as reliable big-leaguers, but management recognized the glaring absence of Nos. 1 and 2 starters. So chief baseball officer Craig Breslow solved that problem first by trading prized catching prospect Kyle Teel and 2024 first-rounder Braden Montgomery to the White Sox as part of a four-player package for Crochet, and then by signing World Series hero Walker Buehler from the Dodgers. Crochet brings overpowering stuff from the left side, which helps balance the otherwise right-handed rotation. Buehler owns 18 starts of playoff experience, as well as a desire to prove he's all the way back from a second Tommy John surgery before entering free agency again next year. Add righty Lucas Giolito, who's expected back from elbow surgery of his own, and the Red Sox have the potential for the top rotation in the division.

BULLPEN

Expect to hear the phrase "work in progress" all spring. The Red Sox entered the offseason intent on turning over virtually the entire pen in an attempt to add more swing-and-miss to the late innings, especially after letting closer Kenley Jansen and primary setup man Chris Martin hit free agency. The hope is that former All-Star Liam Hendriks can assume the closing role after missing 2024 to Tommy John, but if he can't, flamethrowing lefthander Aroldis Chapman provides battle-tested insurance in his 16th season. After that, Rule 5 success story Justin Slaten should secure a late-inning role, with rehabbing righthander Garrett Whitlock possibly joining him once he recovers from elbow surgery. Rotation depth could move Crawford and Cooper Criswell to relief as well, with veterans Justin Wilson and Brennan Bernardino possibilities from the left side. Ideally, one more power arm, like Luis Guerrero, would emerge this spring.

MIDDLE INFIELD

There might not be a more important player on the roster than shortstop Trevor Story. Signed to a six-year, \$140 million deal in 2022, Story has endured one injury after another, culminating in a broken shoulder that limited him to a career-low 26 games. A healthy Story brings Gold Glove-caliber defense,



Rafael Devers

Fenway Park

Opened: 1912 • Capacity: 37,755
 Left: 310' Center: 390' Right: 302'
 Tickets: 877-REDSOX9
mlb.com/REDSOX

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Highest single-season batting average on balls in play, 2021-24

1. 2023 Rockies	.315
2. 2024 Red Sox	.314
3. 2022 Red Sox	.313
4. 2023 Red Sox	.310
5. 2021 White Sox	.310

right-handed punch to an overly left-handed lineup and leadership to a young clubhouse. He's vital to whatever hopes of contention the Red Sox harbor. The identity of his double-play partner remains very much up in the air. Prospect Kristian Campbell might've been the best player in the minors last year, but he has only 70 at-bats at Triple-A and could end up in left field. Ceddanne Rafaela is another possibility, but he might be better suited to a super-utility role. That leaves the disappointing Vaughn Grissom, who arrived last year from the Braves for eventual NL Cy Young winner Chris Sale and promptly hit .190.

CORNERS

If you're looking for thump, this is where you'll find it. Third baseman Rafael Devers may not be much

of a fielder or leader or willing face of the franchise, but his \$313.5 million contract does provide the Red Sox with serious firepower. Devers is a .310-45-135 season waiting to happen, and maybe it will be this one. Across the diamond, hulking first baseman Triston Casas has 40-homer power of his own, and he'd undoubtedly like to make amends for a lost 2024 limited to 63 games by injuries. A lot will depend on how much damage these two can do.



Jarren Duran

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

LF	Jarren Duran (L)
3B	Rafael Devers (L)
SS	Trevor Story (R)
1B	Triston Casas (L)
DH	Masataka Yoshida (L)
C	Connor Wong (R)
RF	Wilyer Abreu (L)
CF	Ceddanne Rafaela (R)
2B	Kristian Campbell (R)

■ BENCH

C	Carlos Narváez (R)
OF	Rob Refsnyder (R)
SS	David Hamilton (L)
2B/OF	Romy Gonzalez (R)

■ ROTATION

LHP	Garrett Crochet
RHP	Walker Buehler
RHP	Tanner Houck
RHP	Lucas Giolito
RHP	Brayan Bello

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Liam Hendriks (C)
LHP	Aroldis Chapman
RHP	Justin Slaten
RHP	Garrett Whitlock
RHP	Kutter Crawford
RHP	Cooper Criswell
LHP	Brennan Bernardino
LHP	Justin Wilson

OUTFIELD

Score one for Chaim Bloom. The former chief baseball officer had ample opportunity to trade Jarren Duran from 2021-23 but stuck by the athletic outfielder, and the Red Sox reaped serious dividends. Duran finished fourth in the AL in WAR (8.7) and eighth in the MVP voting, becoming the first player since 1970 to lead the league in doubles and triples in the same season. While he improved so much defensively that he now rates above-average in center, the Red Sox have options. Duran could shift to left for the dazzling Rafaela, who's got Gold Glove potential but lacks plate discipline. Or Duran could stay put, with Campbell getting a look in left. Either way, defending Gold Glover Wilyer Abreu has right field locked down thanks to a fearless, Dirt Dog style of play. One name to keep an eye on: Roman Anthony. One of baseball's best prospects, he will probably open the season at Triple-A, but he'll be in the big leagues soon enough.

CATCHING

This was supposed to be Teel's job for the next decade, but it now belongs to Connor Wong, the last remaining piece of the Mookie Betts trade. Wong played like a borderline All-Star in the first half last year before fading, but he still hit a respectable .280 with 13 homers. Manager Alex Cora prizes Wong's versatility, with the ability to play first, second and in the outfield.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE RED SOX "They'll get a bump up from .500, but not by much. Their pitching needed a big upgrade, and adding Garrett Crochet and Walker Buehler is really significant. That's a strong top of the rotation with Tanner Houck, but they need more consistency from Brayan Bello; he'll look dominant and then take a step back. They have decent depth with Kutter Crawford and Lucas Giolito coming back early in the season. It's not the Yankees' rotation, but they should have offense to stay in most games if they get a full season from Triston Casas and a healthy Trevor Story. Two things they really need to do better are catch the ball and run the bases. If they don't clean those up, they're not a serious championship contender for me."

DH/BENCH

Here’s one area begging for an upgrade. Incumbent DH Masataka Yoshida is too one-dimensional as a singles hitter who’s a liability in the field. In a perfect world, the Red Sox would give his at-bats to Devers and/or Casas and look to improve the infield defense. Beyond Yoshida, the bench should include reliable veteran Rob Refsnyder, who will play a lot vs. lefthanders, as well as speedy infielder David Hamilton. The backup catcher is Carlos Narváez, acquired from the Yankees in December.

MANAGEMENT

Breslow and Cora may be former teammates, but they reside at opposite ends of the experience and reputation spectrums. Cora has won World Series titles as a player, coach and manager and might actually be the face of the franchise. Breslow, conversely, experienced a trial by fire in his debut atop baseball ops, making the ill-fated Sale-for-Grissom trade and then whiffing badly at the deadline when none of his five acquisitions panned out. Breslow is whip-smart, though, and has already proven that he learned from his tentative debut by striking an aggressive trade for Crochet. Cora’s leadership is a strength of the organization, especially with better talent now filling the roster. It will be his job to get the most out of a young roster and Breslow’s to provide the missing pieces.

FINAL ANALYSIS

The Red Sox have promised that this rebuild is leading somewhere, but at considerable cost to their brand. Fans still haven’t forgiven them for trading Betts in 2020 and sitting out free agency pretty much every year since. With just one winning season in that span, the organization has lost the benefit of the doubt — not to mention local market share to the NBA champion Celtics. This is supposed to be the year they start winning everyone back.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

MARCHING TO HIS OWN BEAT Triston Casas does not care what you think. He may be built like Adam Dunn, but he has the soul of a beatnik. He paints his fingernails red and his toenails white; he sunbathes shirtless in the outfield before games; and he once claimed to take thousands of rehab swings “in my head” while working his way back from an oblique injury. “I think people, if not anything else, at least appreciate my unapologetic authenticity,” he says.

WHITLOCK THE SCOUT With the Patriots selecting third in the 2024 NFL Draft, righthander Garrett Whitlock made an impassioned case for them to take Georgia tight end Brock Bowers instead of UNC quarterback Drake Maye. “He has [Rob] Gronkowski potential,” the Peach State native said, and it turns out he was right. Bowers slipped to 13th in the first round before topping 100 catches and 1,000 yards with the Raiders — although Maye turned out pretty well, too.

STORY CAMP Shortstop Trevor Story has barely gotten his Red Sox career off the ground thanks to injuries, but that hasn’t stopped him from assuming a serious leadership role. Case in point — the offseason workouts for young infielders he hosts in Dallas. It’s something Story picked up early in his career from Rockies All-Star Troy Tulowitzki, who invited him to his Las Vegas home. Story has hosted David Hamilton, Vaughn Grissom and Casas, among others.

FUTURE INVESTMENT The Red Sox have signed a number of pitchers coming off injury over the past five years, from lefthander James Paxton to closer Liam Hendriks and now lefthander Patrick Sandoval. Sandoval was non-tendered by the Angels and will probably miss the season following Tommy John surgery last summer, but that didn’t stop the Red Sox from paying him \$18.25 million over the next two years. The hope is that he rehabs and regains the form that made him a solid contributor in 2022, when he posted a 2.91 ERA in 27 starts and threw a shutout.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27	28	29
				TEX	TEX	TEX
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
TEX	BAL		BAL	BAL	STL	STL
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
STL	TOR	TOR	TOR	TOR	CWS	CWS
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
CWS	TB	TB	TB		CWS	CWS
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
CWS	CWS	SEA	SEA	SEA	CLE	CLE
27	28	29	30			
CLE		TOR	TOR			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
				TOR	MIN	MIN
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MIN		TEX	TEX	TEX	KC	KC
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
KC	DET	DET	DET		ATL	ATL
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
ATL	NYM	NYM	NYM	BAL	BAL	BAL
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
BAL	MIL	MIL	MIL		ATL	ATL
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
ATL	LAA	LAA	LAA		NYN	NYN
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
NYN	TB	TB	TB		NYN	NYN
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
NYN	SEA	SEA	SEA		SF	SF
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
SF	LAA	LAA	LAA		TOR	TOR
29	30					
TOR	CIN					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		CIN	CIN		WAS	WAS
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
WAS	COL	COL	COL	TB	TB	TB
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
TB		ALL-STAR BREAK			CHC	CHC
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
CHC	PHI	PHI	PHI		LAD	LAD
27	28	29	30	31		
LAD	MIN	MIN	MIN			
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
					HOU	HOU
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
HOU	KC	KC	KC		SD	SD
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
SD	HOU	HOU	HOU		FLA	FLA
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
FLA	BAL	BAL		NYN	NYN	NYN
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
NYN	BAL	BAL	BAL	BAL	PIT	PIT
31						
PIT						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	CLE	CLE	CLE		ARI	ARI
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
ARI	A's	A's	A's		NYN	NYN
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
NYN		A's	A's	A's	TB	TB
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
TB		TOR	TOR	TOR	DET	DET
28	29	30				
DET						

STATISTICIAN

.533 MLB-worst OPS of Red Sox second basemen, with the best production there coming from starting catcher Connor Wong (.750).

3.47 Brayan Bello's second-half ERA, suggesting the young righthander could be a break-out candidate.

TOP-10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Roman Anthony, OF (20)**
Has a rounded skill set and a ceiling of future All-Star.

■ **2. Kristian Campbell, 2B/LF (22)** Hit .330 with 20 homers between three levels.

■ **3. Marcelo Mayer, SS (22)**
He remains the shortstop of the future, with 25-homer potential.

■ **4. Franklin Arias, SS (19)**
Has all the skills to be an impact defender in the big leagues, and solid bat-to-ball ability, too.

■ **5. Yoeilin Cespedes, SS (19)**
A dead ringer for Howie Kendrick and boasts a similar skill set.

■ **6. Miguel Bleis, CF (21)** The five-tool center fielder struggled in 2024.

■ **7. Jhostynxon Garcia, OF (22)** “The Password” hit .286 with 23 homers between three levels.

■ **8. David Sandlin, RHP (24)**
Has the stuff to be the next man up in the rotation.

■ **9. Nazzan Zanetello, SS (19)**
Has athleticism that suggests a future at short or in center.

■ **10. Luis Perales, RHP (21)** Will likely miss the season, but his fastball hits 99 mph.

Red Sox Roster

Chief Baseball Officer: Craig Breslow • Manager: Alex Cora • Coaches: Andrew Bailey (pitching), Peter Fatse (hitting), Jose Flores (first base/infield instructor), Chris Holt (bullpen), Kyle Hudson (third base/outfield instructor), Dillon Lawson (asst. hitting), Ben Rosenthal (asst. hitting), Jason Varitek (game planning and run prevention), Ramón Vázquez (bench)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
66	Brayan Bello	R-R	6-1	195	5/17/99	BOSTON	14-8	4.49	30	30	0	162.1	157	64	153	
						Portland (AA)	0-1	6.75	1	1	0	2.2	4	2	5	
83	Brennan Bernardino	L-L	6-4	180	1/15/92	BOSTON	4-3	4.06	57	3	0	51.0	50	22	56	
						Worcester (AAA)	0-0	16.20	2	0	0	1.2	3	1	2	
0	Walker Buehler	R-R	6-2	185	7/28/94	LOS ANGELES NL	1-6	5.38	16	16	0	75.1	89	28	64	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-4	5.01	8	8	0	32.1	39	16	35	
						R. Cucamonga (A)	0-0	4.50	1	1	0	2.0	3	1	0	
44	Aroldis Chapman	L-L	6-4	235	2/28/88	PITTSBURGH	5-5	3.79	68	0	14	61.2	44	39	98	
50	Kutter Crawford	R-R	6-1	195	4/1/96	BOSTON	9-16	4.36	33	33	0	183.2	155	51	175	
64	Cooper Criswell	R-R	6-6	200	7/24/96	BOSTON	6-5	4.08	26	18	0	99.1	103	31	73	
						Worcester (AAA)	2-2	1.40	5	5	0	25.2	21	8	23	
35	Garrett Crochet	L-L	6-6	245	6/21/99	CHICAGO AL	6-12	3.58	32	32	0	146.0	123	33	209	
	Hunter Dobbins	R-R	6-2	185	8/30/99	Worcester (AAA)	1-2	2.61	4	4	0	20.2	20	9	22	
						Portland (AA)	7-3	3.17	21	21	0	105.0	90	39	98	
80	Richard Fitts	R-R	6-3	230	12/17/99	BOSTON	0-1	1.74	4	4	0	20.2	19	7	9	
						Worcester (AAA)	9-5	4.17	24	23	0	116.2	112	37	111	
54	Lucas Giolito	R-R	6-6	245	7/14/94	INJURED — Missed Season										
99	Luis Guerrero	R-R	6-0	215	8/5/00	BOSTON	0-0	0.00	9	0	0	10.0	6	2	9	
						Worcester (AAA)	5-3	3.31	42	0	2	54.1	39	32	79	
31	Liam Hendriks	R-R	6-0	235	2/10/89	Worcester (AAA)	0-0	0.00	4	0	0	4.0	2	1	1	
						Portland (AA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	1.0	2	1	2	
89	Tanner Houck	R-R	6-5	226	6/29/96	BOSTON	9-10	3.12	30	30	0	178.2	156	48	154	
76	Zack Kelly	R-R	6-3	231	3/3/95	BOSTON	6-3	3.97	49	3	0	56.2	44	27	61	
						Worcester (AAA)	0-0	0.00	9	0	1	12.2	1	8	13	
72	Chris Murphy	L-L	6-1	186	6/5/98	INJURED — Missed Season										
67	Zach Penrod	L-L	6-2	210	6/16/97	BOSTON	0-0	2.25	7	0	0	4.0	3	4	3	
						Worcester (AAA)	4-2	5.93	15	5	0	27.1	26	20	40	
						Portland (AA)	4-0	2.80	7	7	0	35.1	23	13	53	
93	Luis Perales	R-R	6-1	160	4/14/03	Portland (AA)	1-0	1.23	2	2	0	7.1	4	2	10	
						Greenville (A)	1-2	3.42	7	7	0	26.1	28	10	46	
68	Quinn Priester	R-R	6-3	210	9/16/00	BOSTON	1-0	1.80	1	1	0	5.0	4	1	2	
						Worcester (AAA)	1-1	5.40	9	9	0	38.1	36	12	42	
						PITTSBURGH	2-6	5.04	10	6	0	44.2	52	13	31	
						Indianapolis (AAA)	3-1	3.21	7	7	0	33.2	29	7	36	
43	Patrick Sandoval	L-L	6-3	190	10/18/96	LOS ANGELES AL	2-8	5.08	16	16	0	79.2	85	35	81	
61	Chase Shugart	L-R	5-10	200	10/24/96	BOSTON	0-0	4.15	6	0	1	8.2	8	3	8	
						Worcester (AAA)	6-2	4.46	36	5	1	70.2	65	32	80	
63	Justin Slaten	R-R	6-4	222	9/15/97	BOSTON	6-2	2.93	44	0	2	55.1	47	9	58	
						Portland (AA)	0-0	27.00	1	0	0	0.1	1	1	1	
57	Greg Weissert	R-R	6-2	235	2/4/95	BOSTON	4-2	3.13	62	0	1	63.1	65	20	58	
						Worcester (AAA)	0-0	1.50	4	0	0	6.0	4	2	7	
22	Garrett Whitlock	R-R	6-5	222	6/11/96	BOSTON	1-0	1.96	4	4	0	18.1	14	7	17	
						Worcester (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	4.2	2	1	5	
32	Justin Wilson	L-L	6-2	205	8/18/87	CINCINNATI	1-5	5.59	60	0	2	46.2	55	13	51	
25	Josh Winckowski	R-R	6-4	215	6/28/98	BOSTON	4-2	4.14	40	6	2	76.0	81	26	60	
						Worcester (AAA)	3-2	2.87	7	6	0	31.1	33	6	29	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Carlos Narváez	R-R	5-11	190	11/26/98	NEW YORK AL	.231	6	13	0	3	0	0	2	6	0
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	.254	96	335	54	85	11	58	56	105	9
12	Connor Wong	R-R	6-1	190	5/19/96	BOSTON	.280	126	447	54	125	13	52	28	114	8
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	Kristian Campbell	R-R	6-3	210	6/28/02	Greenville (A+)	.306	40	147	29	45	8	25	26	47	3
						Portland (AA)	.362	56	213	48	77	8	35	35	38	17
						Worcester (AAA)	.286	19	70	17	20	4	17	13	18	4
36	Triston Casas	L-R	6-5	244	1/15/00	BOSTON	.241	63	212	28	51	13	32	30	77	0
						Worcester (AAA)	.286	12	42	5	12	1	7	6	14	0
11	Rafael Devers	L-R	6-0	235	10/24/96	BOSTON	.272	138	525	87	143	28	83	67	147	3
23	Romy Gonzalez	R-R	6-0	215	9/6/96	BOSTON	.266	89	199	25	53	6	29	12	58	11
						Worcester (AAA)	.373	13	51	8	19	3	17	4	10	3
5	Vaughn Grissom	R-R	6-2	210	1/5/01	BOSTON	.190	31	105	10	20	0	6	7	24	2
						Worcester (AAA)	.259	55	193	27	50	6	34	36	45	10
17	David Hamilton	L-R	5-10	188	9/29/97	BOSTON	.248	98	294	47	73	8	28	22	80	33
						Worcester (AAA)	.167	5	18	3	3	2	2	2	6	0
20	Nick Sogard	S-R	6-0	189	9/9/97	BOSTON	.273	31	77	13	21	0	8	7	25	3
						Worcester (AAA)	.283	96	368	69	104	13	59	64	90	10
10	Trevor Story	R-R	6-2	209	11/15/92	BOSTON	.255	26	94	8	24	2	10	11	33	6
						Worcester (AAA)	.375	4	16	3	6	0	2	0	2	1
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
52	Wilyer Abreu	L-L	5-10	215	6/24/99	BOSTON	.253	132	399	59	101	15	58	40	125	8
						Worcester (AAA)	.250	3	12	3	3	2	2	1	3	0
16	Jarren Duran	L-R	6-2	205	9/5/96	BOSTON	.285	160	671	111	191	21	75	54	160	34
	Jhostynxon Garcia	R-R	6-0	163	12/11/02	Portland (AA)	.263	30	114	14	30	2	10	6	24	2
						Greenville (A)	.311	53	209	44	65	16	37	12	50	1
						Salem (A)	.258	24	89	20	23	5	19	15	25	14
3	Ceddanne Rafaela	R-R	5-9	165	9/18/00	BOSTON	.246	152	544	70	134	15	75	15	151	19
30	Rob Refsnyder	R-R	6-0	215	3/26/91	BOSTON	.283	93	272	32	77	11	40	28	78	2
						Worcester (AAA)	.333	4	12	3	4	1	1	1	5	0
7	Masataka Yoshida	L-R	5-8	192	7/15/93	BOSTON	.280	108	378	45	106	10	56	27	52	2
						Worcester (AAA)	.143	2	7	2	1	0	0	1	2	0



New York YANKEES

2025 PREDICTION

1ST

AL EAST

2024 FINISH: 1st (94-68)

Oh, what twists the last part of the 2024 season and the winter took for the Yankees, who finally got back to the World Series only to have their fundamentals crater in one horrific inning in a Game 5 loss to the champion Dodgers. Then, after a bidding war to retain star Juan Soto, the generational hitter bolted for the Mets, adding caffeine to an already-fierce New York City rivalry. Unbowed, the Yankees plowed ahead with a busy offseason and just might have re-imagined themselves as a run-prevention juggernaut capable of contending for another Fall Classic berth. They've still got plenty of pop, which should help propel another fascinating season in the Bronx.

ROTATION

This should be their strength, thanks to starting depth and skill, which was enhanced by the addition of free agent Max Fried. The Yanks ranked ninth in starter innings last year even though Gerrit Cole, who remains the No. 1, missed significant time with elbow inflammation. Cole was good when he returned, but since he'll be pitching at age 34, his health could be a constant topic. Fried, whose eight-year, \$218 million contract is the largest ever given to a lefthander, figures to slot in at No. 2. His wide repertoire helps him get tons of ground balls; his 59 percent ground-ball rate led the National League. Righty Luis Gil, who was 15-7 with a 3.50 ERA last season en route to the AL Rookie of the Year Award, has big-time stuff. He had 17 starts of one or fewer runs allowed, matching Tarik Skubal of the Tigers, the AL Cy Young winner, and Garrett Crochet of the White Sox for the most in the majors. But Gil must learn to harness his weapons — he issued the most walks in the majors with 77 — and he'll have to answer stamina questions as he faded late in the season. Lefty Carlos Rodón led the Yanks in wins (16) and had a 3.96 ERA, though he's still homer-prone (1.6 per nine innings). Clarke Schmidt had a 2.85 ERA in 2024, though injuries limited him to 16 starts. Righty Marcus Stroman offers veteran depth.

BULLPEN

New York used rotation surplus as part of a trade, sending Nestor Cortes and a prospect to Milwaukee for closer Devin Williams, owner of the nastiest changeup around — the “Airbender.” Williams has a 1.83 ERA in six MLB seasons and, since 2020, is tops among relievers in opponent average (.145) and opponent slugging (.227). Opponents hit .162 against the Airbender last year and .111 against its complement — Williams' mid-90s four-seamer. Williams will take over closing duties from Luke Weaver, who emerged as one of the game's best relievers as a multi-inning weapon — 31 of his 62 appearances lasted at least four outs. Righty Fernando Cruz struck out 14.7 batters per nine innings in 2024, tops among pitchers who threw at least 50 innings. But he walks too many, and his strikeout stuff hasn't kept his ERA below 4.86 in two full MLB seasons. Jonathan Loáisiga could have a big impact if he can stay healthy. Mark Leiter Jr. was a deadline pickup who wasn't great in the regular season (4.98



Aaron Judge

Yankee Stadium

Opened: 2009 • Capacity: 46,537
Left: 318' Center: 408' Right: 314'
Tickets: 877-469-9849
mlb.com/YANKEES

5-Year Win Trend



Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Highest single-season walk rate,
2021-24

1. 2024 Yankees	10.8
2. 2023 Padres	10.6
3. 2021 Yankees	10.2
4. 2023 Dodgers	10.2
5. 2022 Yankees	10.0

BRAD PENNER-IMAGN IMAGES

ERA) but allowed only one run in six October outings. Jake Cousins and Ian Hamilton should be featured, too.

MIDDLE INFIELD

The Yankees went into the winter having to decide whether Jazz Chisholm Jr. was going to play second to replace Gleyber Torres or return to third, where he moved after a deadline trade. Wherever he starts, Chisholm is a wonderful blend of skill and pizzazz. He was one of four MLB players to hit at least 24 homers and steal 40 bases last season, joining Shohei Ohtani, Elly De La Cruz and José Ramírez. Anthony Volpe improved his batting average and on-base percentage in his sophomore season, but his slugging dipped. Still, he's a superlative defensive shortstop.

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

SS	Anthony Volpe (R)
CF	Cody Bellinger (L)
RF	Aaron Judge (R)
C	Austin Wells (L)
DH	Giancarlo Stanton (R)
2B	Jazz Chisholm Jr. (L)
1B	Paul Goldschmidt (R)
LF	Jasson Domínguez (S)
3B	Oswaldo Cabrera (S)

■ BENCH

OF	Trent Grisham (L)
INF	DJ LeMahieu (R)
INF	Oswald Peraza (R)
1B/C	Ben Rice (L)

■ ROTATION

RHP	Gerrit Cole
LHP	Max Fried
RHP	Luis Gil
LHP	Carlos Rodón
RHP	Clarke Schmidt
RHP	Marcus Stroman

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Devin Williams (C)
RHP	Luke Weaver
RHP	Jake Cousins
RHP	Ian Hamilton
RHP	Jonathan Loáisiga
RHP	Fernando Cruz
RHP	Scott Effross

CORNERS

New first baseman Paul Goldschmidt could be an enormous improvement, considering Yankee first basemen had an MLB-worst .335 slugging percentage last year and ranked 27th in FanGraphs' WAR at the position. At 37, he's no longer an MVP-level star. But he'll help a team looking to improve defensively, and if he can pop 20-25 homers while batting seventh in the lineup, even better. Whatever happens, Goldschmidt is only signed for one year. If not Chisholm, then switch-hitter/hype man Oswaldo Cabrera or Oswald Peraza could man third. DJ LeMahieu, hoping to emerge from a poor, injury-plagued 2024, could figure at either corner, too. New Yankee Cody Bellinger will probably make starts at first as well.

OUTFIELD

There's a Soto-sized hole in the Yankee outfield, obviously. Still, Aaron Judge remains perhaps the game's scariest single force. The defending AL MVP led MLB in homers (58), RBIs (144) and OPS (1.159) and more. The Yanks added Bellinger, a needed lefty bat, via trade with the Cubs. Bellinger, who could play center, might enjoy a power resurgence thanks to the short right-field porch at Yankee Stadium. Judge likely will move back to his natural spot, right field, and the Yanks' defense will be better. Prospect Jasson Domínguez likely gets a crack at left, though the Yankees were concerned about his defense last year.



Gerrit Cole

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE YANKEES "It was impressive how quickly and decisively they moved after losing Juan Soto. They gave it their best shot, lost the guy — then upgraded in a bunch of different spots. Aaron Judge carried them for a lot of the year — with Soto, of course, and Austin Wells for a while. I know Wells didn't hit in October, but he's got a good bat and he's strong behind the plate. Jazz Chisholm Jr. fits better at second than third, and I like Anthony Volpe at short, but I wonder if this is as good as it'll get offensively. It's time to see what they have in Jasson Domínguez, and they get a lot more athletic with him and Cody Bellinger in the lineup. Bellinger is made for that park, too. Gerrit Cole didn't have a spring training, but once he got rolling, he was the same guy as always. Consistent, high-level stuff. You hope for that from Carlos Rodón, but you never know what he'll give you from start to start. Max Fried is a classic No. 2 who will do well at Yankee Stadium. Clarke Schmidt and Luis Gil should keep getting better, and I love Devin Williams at the back of that bullpen."

CATCHING

Austin Wells, 25, emerged as the Yanks’ starting catcher with power and defense, a development that made Jose Trevino expendable over the winter. Wells ranked second among AL backstops with 3.5 WAR, and he’s a solid pitch framer, a metric that the Yankees adore. Wells also slugged 13 homers — the second-most by a rookie catcher in Yankee history, behind the 20 that Gary Sánchez hit in 2016.

DH/BENCH

Giancarlo Stanton, the active MLB home run leader, is coming off a massive postseason (seven homers, 16 RBIs in 14 games) and provides punch. Cabrera and Peraza are infield-outfield bench pieces, and Trent Grisham provides back-up coverage on the grass, too. Ben Rice could vie for some platoon reps at first.

MANAGEMENT

In November, the Yankees exercised the 2025 option on manager Aaron Boone’s contract, bringing him back for an eighth season. While some fans believe the Yanks should move on from Boone and general manager Brian Cashman, there’s evidence that the club remains in good hands. The Yankees are coming off a World Series appearance and have made the postseason seven times in eight years. Boone’s winning percentage at the helm is an eye-popping .584.

FINAL ANALYSIS

The Yankees seem poised for another October party, if their run prevention calculus is right, Judge is Judge and kids such as Volpe and Wells continue to advance. But they are relying on several 32-plus players, including Judge (33), Cole (34), Goldschmidt (37) and Stanton (35). What if they show their age all at once?



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

OCTOBER JUDGE-MENT Aaron Judge has 16 career postseason home runs in 58 games, a 45-homer pace over a full season, but he’s struggled mightily, too. He has a career October OPS of .768, 242 points worse than his overall mark. Over the last two postseasons, Judge has a slash line of .165/.284/.365 and 35 strikeouts in 85 at-bats. Yankee fans have noticed. He’ll break out big in an upcoming October, won’t he?

FIRST RUN(S) The Yanks scored an AL-best 106 runs in the first inning and slugged 40 first-inning home runs, tops in MLB. When they tallied that early, they were tough to beat, going 48-10 when scoring in the first frame.

LIKE FATHER... After the Yankees traded for Cody Bellinger in December, Cody and his dad, Clay, were in line to become the fourth father-son duo in Yankee history. The others: Yogi and Dale Berra, Ron and Ike Davis and Mark Leiter and Mark Leiter Jr. Clay Bellinger was a utility player for the Yankees from 1999-2001, appearing in 181 games and winning two World Series rings.

PILING UP WINS Since 2019, new Yankee Max Fried has earned 71 victories, which is second among MLB pitchers. Considering Gerrit Cole has the most (79), the Yanks might finally have a dream 1-2 duo in their starting rotation.

YOU AGAIN? Judge reached base multiple times in 100 games in 2024, tops in the majors. It made him one of five Yankees to ever accomplish the feat. The others? Babe Ruth (nine times), Lou Gehrig (seven times) and Mickey Mantle and Derek Jeter (once each).

LET’S GO STREAKING Last season, Judge (37 consecutive games) and Anthony Volpe (34) had long on-base streaks across May and June. It was the first time since 1940 the Yankees had two players with such streaks in the same season.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27	28	29
				MIL		MIL
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
MIL		ARI	ARI	ARI	PIT	PIT
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
PIT	DET	DET	DET		SF	SF
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
SF	KC	KC	KC	TB	TB	TB
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
TB	CLE	CLE	CLE		TOR	TOR
27	28	29	30			
TOR	BAL	BAL	BAL			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
					TB	TB
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
TB	SD	SD	SD		A's	A's
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
A's	SEA	SEA	SEA		NYM	NYM
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
NYM		TEX	TEX	TEX	COL	COL
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
COL	LAA	LAA	LAA		LAD	LAD
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
LAD		CLE	CLE	CLE	BOS	BOS
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
BOS		KC	KC	KC	BOS	BOS
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
BOS	LAA	LAA	LAA	LAA	BAL	BAL
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
BAL	CIN	CIN	CIN		A's	A's
29	30					
A's	TOR					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		TOR	TOR	TOR	NYM	NYM
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
NYM		SEA	SEA	SEA	CHC	CHC
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
CH		ALL-STAR BREAK			ATL	ATL
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
ATL	TOR	TOR	TOR		PHI	PHI
27	28	29	30	31		
PHI	TB	TB	TB	TB		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
					MIA	MIA
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
MIA	TEX	TEX	TEX		HOU	HOU
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
HOU	MIN	MIN	MIN		STL	STL
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
STL		TB	TB	BOS	BOS	BOS
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
BOS	WAS	WAS	WAS	CWS	CWS	CWS
31						
CWS						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		HOU	HOU	HOU	TOR	TOR
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
TOR		DET	DET	DET	BOS	BOS
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
BOS	MIN	MIN	MIN	BAL	BAL	BAL
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
BAL		CWS	CWS	CWS	BAL	BAL
28	29	30				
BAL						

STATISTICIAN

32 Consecutive winning seasons by the Yankees, the second-longest streak in MLB history. The Yanks are aiming to topple their own record — they had 39 consecutive winning seasons from 1926-64.

55 The Yankees were 55-38 in 2024 against teams with a .500 record or better, the most wins in MLB in that category.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Jasson Domínguez, OF (22)** Toolsy youngster could impact the MLB roster now.

■ **2. George Lombard Jr., INF (19)** Has plate discipline and is a potential future star.

■ **3. Spencer Jones, OF (23)** He strikes out too much, but 17 homers and 25 steals show an exciting power-speed blend.

■ **4. Roderick Arias, SS (20)** Arm strength, power and speed are his separating skills.

■ **5. Will Warren, RHP (25)** Fills the zone with four pitches; impressed scouts in the high minors.

■ **6. Chase Hampton, RHP (23)** His fastball is a spin-rate monster that can reach 97 mph.

■ **7. Everson Pereira, OF (23)** Had an .858 OPS in 40 games at Triple-A before UCL operation.

■ **8. Henry Lalane, LHP (20)** Has a mid-90s fastball and touch on a nifty changeup.

■ **9. Ben Hess, RHP (22)** Boasts a fastball that can touch 99 mph.

■ **10. Brock Selvidge, LHP (22)** He had a 4.25 ERA in 16 starts in Double-A.

Yankees Roster

Senior Vice President, General Manager: Brian Cashman • Manager: Aaron Boone • Coaches: Brad Ausmus (bench), Matt Blake (pitching), Travis Chapman (first base), Desi Druschel (asst. pitching), Casey Dykes (asst. hitting), Mike Harkey (bullpen), Pat Roessler (asst. hitting), Luis Rojas (third base), James Rowson (hitting), Tanner Swanson (field coordinator and director of catching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
85	Clayton Beeter	R-R	6-2	220	10/9/98	NEW YORK AL	0-0	4.91	3	0	0	3.2	4	1	5	
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	3-1	2.25	10	7	0	36.0	18	21	51	
						Somerset (AA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	3.0	1	0	5	
	JT Brubaker	R-R	6-3	180	11/17/93	Scranton/WB (AAA)	0-0	4.05	5	2	0	6.2	4	6	4	
						Somerset (AA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	3.0	1	1	3	
						Tampa (A)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	3.0	2	0	2	
						FCL Yankees (R)	0-0	4.50	1	1	0	4.0	1	1	0	
45	Gerrit Cole	R-R	6-4	220	9/8/90	NEW YORK AL	8-5	3.41	17	17	0	95.0	78	29	99	
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	4.1	2	0	10	
						Somerset (AA)	0-0	1.13	2	2	0	8.0	4	0	9	
61	Jake Cousins	R-R	6-4	195	7/14/94	NEW YORK AL	2-1	2.37	37	0	1	38.0	20	20	53	
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	1-0	3.00	7	0	2	6.0	4	4	8	
63	Fernando Cruz	R-R	6-2	237	3/28/90	CINCINNATI	3-8	4.86	69	3	0	66.2	54	35	109	
						Yerry De Los Santos	R-R	6-2	210	12/12/97	Scranton/WB (AAA)	2-2	4.12	51	1	4
59	Scott Effross	R-R	6-2	202	12/28/93	NEW YORK AL	0-0	5.40	3	0	0	3.1	3	2	2	
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	7-1	2.78	27	0	1	32.1	25	9	28	
						Tampa (A)	1-0	0.00	2	0	0	3.0	1	0	4	
54	Max Fried	L-L	6-4	190	1/18/94	ATLANTA	11-10	3.25	29	29	0	174.1	146	57	166	
81	Luis Gil	R-R	6-2	185	6/3/98	NEW YORK AL	15-7	3.50	29	29	0	151.2	104	77	171	
						Somerset (AA)	0-0	7.36	1	1	0	3.2	4	2	6	
92	Yoendrys Gómez	R-R	6-3	212	10/15/99	NEW YORK AL	0-0	3.97	5	0	0	11.1	11	7	10	
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	3-5	3.67	23	21	0	83.1	58	39	93	
71	Ian Hamilton	R-R	6-1	200	6/16/95	NEW YORK AL	0-1	3.82	35	0	1	37.2	37	14	41	
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.2	0	0	0	
						Somerset (AA)	1-0	0.00	2	0	0	2.1	0	0	6	
56	Mark Leiter Jr.	R-R	6-0	210	3/13/91	NEW YORK AL	2-1	4.98	21	0	0	21.2	28	9	33	
						CHICAGO NL	2-4	4.21	39	0	0	36.1	27	13	53	
	Jonathan Loáisiga	R-R	5-11	165	11/2/94	NEW YORK AL	1-0	0.00	3	0	0	4.0	7	1	3	
55	Carlos Rodón	L-L	6-2	255	12/10/92	NEW YORK AL	16-9	3.96	32	32	0	175.0	157	57	195	
36	Clarke Schmidt	R-R	6-1	200	2/20/96	NEW YORK AL	5-5	2.85	16	16	0	85.1	71	30	93	
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	0-0	3.00	1	1	0	3.0	3	1	5	
						Somerset (AA)	0-0	3.24	2	2	0	8.1	4	1	13	
0	Marcus Stroman	R-R	5-7	180	5/1/91	NEW YORK AL	10-9	4.31	30	29	1	154.2	167	60	113	
98	Will Warren	R-R	6-2	175	6/16/99	NEW YORK AL	0-3	10.32	6	5	0	22.2	33	10	29	
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	6-5	5.91	23	23	0	109.2	114	39	136	
30	Luke Weaver	R-R	6-2	183	8/21/93	NEW YORK AL	7-3	2.89	62	0	4	84.0	52	26	103	
38	Devin Williams	R-R	6-2	193	9/21/94	MILWAUKEE	1-0	1.25	22	0	14	21.2	10	11	38	
						Nashville (AAA)	0-0	0.00	3	0	0	3.0	1	2	3	
						Wisconsin (A+)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	0	3	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	J.C. Escarra	L-R	6-2	205	4/24/95	Scranton/WB (AAA)	.302	52	169	36	51	8	34	27	30	2
						Somerset (AA)	.233	72	257	41	60	4	30	28	38	1
	Alex Jackson	R-R	6-2	238	12/25/95	TAMPA BAY	.122	58	139	17	17	3	12	12	53	1
						Durham (AAA)	.238	28	105	17	25	8	20	12	27	0
	Jesus Rodriguez	R-R	5-10	182	4/23/02	Somerset (AA)	.226	23	84	9	19	5	14	4	19	2
						Hudson Valley (A+)	.332	56	211	39	70	5	33	29	30	7
28	Austin Wells	L-R	6-2	220	7/12/99	NEW YORK AL	.229	115	354	42	81	13	55	47	87	1
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
95	Oswaldo Cabrera	S-R	5-11	200	3/1/99	NEW YORK AL	.247	109	299	47	74	8	36	21	63	4
13	Jazz Chisholm Jr.	L-R	5-11	184	2/1/98	NEW YORK AL	.273	46	176	28	48	11	23	14	45	18
						MIAMI	.249	101	386	46	96	13	50	39	107	22
46	Paul Goldschmidt	R-R	6-3	225	9/10/87	ST. LOUIS	.245	154	599	70	147	22	65	47	173	11
26	DJ LeMahieu	R-R	6-4	220	7/13/88	NEW YORK AL	.204	67	201	19	41	2	26	19	35	0
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	.000	2	5	1	0	0	0	2	1	0
						Somerset (AA)	.500	3	4	2	2	0	1	3	1	0
						Hudson Valley (A+)	.286	2	7	1	2	0	1	0	1	0
91	Oswald Peraza	R-R	5-11	200	6/15/00	NEW YORK AL	.200	4	10	2	2	1	1	1	3	0
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	.246	92	350	62	86	13	60	43	85	24
						Somerset (AA)	.125	5	16	4	2	2	2	4	7	1
						Tampa (A)	.400	2	5	3	2	1	1	2	1	0
93	Ben Rice	L-R	6-1	215	2/22/99	NEW YORK AL	.171	50	152	20	26	7	23	20	48	0
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	.294	30	109	29	32	12	33	25	26	2
						Somerset (AA)	.261	49	180	36	47	12	26	32	46	8
90	Jorbit Vivas	L-R	5-9	171	3/9/01	Scranton/WB (AAA)	.225	93	347	57	78	9	45	58	70	20
						Hudson Valley (A+)	.313	4	16	4	5	0	5	2	3	0
						Tampa (A)	.091	4	11	2	1	0	0	3	3	1
11	Anthony Volpe	R-R	5-9	180	4/28/01	NEW YORK AL	.243	160	637	90	155	12	60	42	156	28
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
35	Cody Bellinger	L-L	6-4	203	7/13/95	CHICAGO NL	.266	130	516	72	137	18	78	45	89	9
89	Jasson Dominguez	S-R	5-9	190	2/7/03	NEW YORK AL	.179	18	56	8	10	2	4	11	19	5
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	.309	44	175	33	54	7	25	16	36	15
						Somerset (AA)	.316	10	38	8	12	4	8	2	11	1
						Tampa (A)	.385	4	13	2	5	0	2	4	3	0
12	Trent Grisham	L-L	5-11	224	11/1/96	NEW YORK AL	.190	76	179	21	34	9	31	22	57	1
99	Aaron Judge	R-R	6-7	282	4/26/92	NEW YORK AL	.322	158	559	122	180	58	144	133	171	10
80	Everson Pereira	R-R	5-11	191	4/10/01	Scranton/WB (AAA)	.265	40	162	33	43	10	27	16	59	5
27	Giancarlo Stanton	R-R	6-6	245	11/8/89	NEW YORK AL	.233	114	417	49	97	27	72	38	143	0

Tampa Bay **RAYS**

2025 PREDICTION

4TH

AL EAST

2024 FINISH: 4TH (80-82)

The Rays have a lot going against them in 2025. With domed Tropicana Field significantly damaged by Hurricane Milton in October, the Rays will play the 2025 season outdoors at Tampa's George M. Steinbrenner Field, spring home of the Yankees. To combat the summer heat and rain, they adjusted their schedule to be frontloaded with home games, leaving them on the road for much of July-August. Additionally, they head to spring training with no certainty on where they will play from 2026 on, given issues with the deal for a planned new stadium, which will be an ongoing topic of conversation.

But team officials expect the players to embrace the multiple challenges and compete to return to the playoffs after 2024's 80-82 finish snapped their five-year streak of postseason appearances.

Keys will be how several hitters bounce back from down years; how much third baseman Junior Caminero can provide in his first full season; and the health of their starting pitchers given past injuries.



Junior Caminero

ROTATION

Manager Kevin Cash said at the winter meetings that the rotation was "probably the most exciting part about our club," and for good reason. Even after trading Jeffrey Springs in December, the Rays feel they have six frontline starters and depth behind them (including Joe Boyle, who headlined the return for Springs from the A's). For several Tampa Bay starters, the key will be how they handle the workload coming off elbow surgery rehabs. Two-time All-Star Shane McClellan (the lone lefty) missed all of 2024, Drew Rasmussen returned in August as a multi-inning reliever and Shane Bieber hasn't pitched a full season since his 2022 Tommy John repair. On the plus side, they expect Taj Bradley, Zack Littell and Ryan Pepiot to be as good as or better than last year, although Littell's 156.1 innings were the most of any of their starters. If all are healthy to start the season, Rasmussen could slide back to the bullpen.

BULLPEN

The Rays started the season with one of their most experienced and highest-paid bullpens, but due to injuries and inconsistency, they re-made it on the fly and feel they came out ahead — enough so that they then dropped a few more veterans in the offseason. Closer Pete Fairbanks has been mentioned in trade talks, but when healthy (which has been an issue), he provides an anchor, with fearlessness and an aggressive attitude. What the rest of the current group lacks in experience, they make up for with live arms, high velocity and potential. Minor-league call-ups Edwin Uceta, Manuel Rodríguez and lefty Mason Montgomery, plus July trade acquisition Hunter Bigge, all have high-end end-of-game stuff and showed it at times down the stretch. Kevin Kelly, Cole Sulser and lefty Garrett Cleavinger provide consistency. Rasmussen (if he isn't starting) and/or Jacob Waguespack can bridge multiple innings, which may be important given their high risk of rain-interrupted games.

George M. Steinbrenner Field

Opened: 1996 • Capacity: 11,026
 Left: 318' Center: 408' Right: 314'
 Tickets: 888-FAN-RAYS
mlb.com/RAYS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Highest percentage of defensive plays shaded, 2024

1. Rays	49.4
2. Angels	47.8
3. Blue Jays	46.1
4. Astros	39.9
5. Mariners	37.8

MIDDLE INFIELD

The Rays brag frequently that Taylor Walls is the best defensive shortstop in the major leagues. But to maintain his hold on the starting spot, he will have to improve his terrible offensive numbers — a career .188 average and .580 OPS over 1,243 plate appearances. Until 21-year-old prospect Carson Williams, who will start the season at Triple-A, is deemed ready (or Wander Franco gets cleared from his legal issues and can rejoin the team), Walls seems likely to hold on to the spot, though José Caballero may get some time. Brandon Lowe is known more for his bat — with 30-plus homer power — but plays better defense than you think at second. The key is keeping him healthy, which may lead to some time at DH or first base.

PROJECTED LINEUP**■ LINEUP**

1B	Yandy Díaz (R)
2B	Brandon Lowe (L)
3B	Junior Caminero (R)
RF	Josh Lowe (L)
CF	Jonny DeLuca (R)
DH	Jonathan Aranda (L)
C	Danny Jansen (R)
LF	Christopher Morel (R)
SS	Taylor Walls (S)

■ BENCH

UTIL	José Caballero (R)
OF/DH	Eloy Jiménez (R)
INF/OF	Richie Palacios (L)
C	Ben Rortvedt (L)

■ ROTATION

LHP	Shane McClanahan
RHP	Zack Littell
RHP	Taj Bradley
RHP	Ryan Pepiot
RHP	Shane Baz

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Pete Fairbanks (C)
LHP	Garrett Cleavinger
RHP	Kevin Kelly
LHP	Mason Montgomery
RHP	Drew Rasmussen
RHP	Manuel Rodríguez
RHP	Cole Sulser
RHP	Edwin Uceta

CORNERS

One of the players who could have the biggest impact on the Rays' season is Caminero. After solid showings in parts of the last two seasons, the 21-year-old is set for his first full season and is being counted on to produce in the middle of the lineup. Caminero likes being in the spotlight, and with better defense than expected last year and a knack for hitting the ball hard and far, he has a chance to be an All-Star for the foreseeable future. After winning the 2023 AL batting title and a Silver Slugger award with a .330 average and .932

OPS, first baseman Yandy Díaz got off to a slow start last year and couldn't fully recover, hitting .281 with a .755 OPS. He's 33 now and may get some more DH days in the last guaranteed year of his contract, but he is still considered the catalyst for their lineup.

OUTFIELD

The Rays decided that waiting for Jose Siri's immense potential to blossom wasn't worth putting up with the inconsistencies in his play and attitude, and they traded him to the Mets. That move turns center field over to Jonny DeLuca, who showed improving numbers the more he played last season after the Rays acquired him in December 2023 from the Dodgers. Like Caminero, right fielder Josh Lowe can have a major impact on the team's fortunes if he produces like he did in 2023 (.292 AVG, 20 home runs, 83 RBIs, .835 OPS) as opposed to struggling as he did in 2024 (.241, 10, 34, .693) after being sidelined in the spring by injuries to his hamstring, right oblique and left hip. Christopher Morel, who disappointed after being acquired in July from the Cubs, and versatile lefty Richie Palacios seem likely to share left field. Caballero could get some occasional work in the outfield if the Rays don't make another addition.



Shane McClanahan

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE RAYS "These guys just never go away. The stadium issue is obviously a huge deal; I've always thought they benefit from the consistent conditions at the Trop. They'll have the same field dimensions as Yankee Stadium now, which should help their left-handed hitters. It feels like we've been saying it since his big breakout year, but look for a big season from Brandon Lowe with that short right-field porch. They'll count on him and Yandy Díaz a lot and do a lot of their usual mixing and matching. But if you're looking for breakout guys, Junior Caminero has a chance to be impactful and Josh Lowe, if he's healthy. They freed up some money trading Jeffrey Springs, but their rotation could still be really good with Shane McClanahan and Drew Rasmussen coming back."

CATCHING

The Rays addressed what they said was their No. 1 priority, adding a catcher with proven offensive ability. They signed Danny Jansen, banking that his down 2024 season (.205, .658 OPS) for Toronto and Boston was an aberration and that he'll provide needed offense to go with his strong work behind the plate and clubhouse leadership. Lefty swinger Ben Rortvedt, who was the primary starter last year, will return to a secondary role, with Logan Driscoll available for call-ups from Triple-A.

DH/BENCH

A spring hand injury kept Jonathan Aranda from getting his planned chance for regular at-bats last season, but the Rays will give him another shot after a strong 2024 finish. The lefty swinger can share first base and DH with Díaz and make occasional appearances at second. Eloy Jiménez, the former White Sox slugger, could have a major impact at DH (and occasionally in the outfield) if he can return to previous form after signing a minor-league deal. Caballero and Palacios provide plenty of positional versatility off the bench.

MANAGEMENT

Baseball operations president Erik Neander and Cash made a point early in the offseason to start the messaging on how they expect their players to turn the situation into an us-against-the-world positive. If there is a manager who can get the players to buy in, Cash — who is heading into his 11th season and is the longest-tenured manager with his current team — is among the best at doing so. Pitching coach Kyle Snyder, hitting coach Chad Mottola and bench coach Rodney Linares also will play key roles in keeping the players focused.

FINAL ANALYSIS

The Rays are trying hard to make the best of a bad situation. But given that it will take so much going right for that to happen, it seems like they are asking too much — banking on the starters coming off surgery to stay healthy and the young hitters who struggled last year to bounce back. For it to work, McClanahan, Caminero and Josh Lowe are going to have to have All-Star-caliber seasons. And they don't have much experience, as they followed their July 2024 selloff by dropping several other veterans, cutting the payroll to the low \$60 million range heading into January.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

START STRONG Getting off to a good start will be especially important to the Rays in 2025, as their schedule is frontloaded with home games — thanks to some off-season adjustments — to minimize their exposure to the heat, rain and humidity in July and August, which they will spend mostly on the road. As a result, they will play 37 of their first 55 games at home then have a later stretch where they play 41 of 58 on the road, including a four-city, 12-game, 14-day trip to the West Coast.

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT Danny Jansen was signed to provide offense and some veteran leadership at the catcher spot. But it wasn't a coincidence that he also has also the beneficial experience of playing in an interim/minor-league stadium situation — having been a part of the 2020 and 2021 Blue Jays teams that played in Dunedin and Buffalo due to COVID-related restrictions.

FAMILIAR FACES Rays manager Kevin Cash and Tampa Bay Lightning coach Jon Cooper share an interesting distinction — both are the longest-tenured managers in their leagues with their current teams. Cash is heading into his 11th season, Cooper is in the midst of his 12th. Per STATS LLC, this is the first time two longest-tenured coaches/managers from the four major sports are from the same market since 2015-17, when Boston had Claude Julien (Bruins) and Bill Belichick (Patriots).

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27	28	29
				COL		COL
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
COL	PIT	PIT	PIT		TEX	TEX
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
TEX	LAA	LAA	LAA		ATL	ATL
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
ATL	BOS	BOS	BOS	NYN	NYN	NYN
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
NYN		ARI	ARI	ARI	SD	SD
27	28	29	30			
SD		KC	KC			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
				KC	NYN	NYN
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
NYN		PHI	PHI	PHI	MIL	MIL
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
MIL		TOR	TOR	TOR	MIA	MIA
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
MIA	HOU	HOU	HOU		TOR	TOR
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
TOR	MIN	MIN	MIN	HOU	HOU	HOU
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
HOU		TEX	TEX	TEX	MIA	MIA
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
MIA	BOS	BOS	BOS		NYM	NYM
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
NYM	BAL	BAL	BAL	BAL	DET	DET
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
DET		KC	KC	KC	BAL	BAL
29	30					
BAL	A's					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		A's	A's		MIN	MIN
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
MIN	DET	DET	DET	BOS	BOS	BOS
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
BOS		ALL-STAR BREAK			BAL	BAL
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
BAL	CWS	CWS	CWS		CIN	CIN
27	28	29	30	31		
CIN	NYN	NYN	NYN	NYN		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
					LAD	LAD
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
LAD		LAA	LAA	LAA	SEA	SEA
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
SEA	A's	A's	A's		SF	SF
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
SF		NYN	NYN		STL	STL
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
STL	CLE	CLE	CLE		WAS	WAS
31						
WAS						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	SEA	SEA	SEA	CLE	CLE	CLE
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
CLE		CWS	CWS	CWS	CHC	CHC
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
CHC	TOR	TOR	TOR	TOR	BOS	BOS
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
BOS		BAL	BAL	BAL	TOR	TOR
28	29	30				
TOR						

STATISTICIAN

14 Consecutive games going to the end of the season with three or fewer earned runs allowed by Rays starter Ryan Pepiot, the longest such active streak in the American League.

24.1 Season-ending scoreless inning streak by reliever Kevin Kelly, third-longest during a single season in franchise history.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



1. Carson Williams, SS (21) Has all the tools — hands, range, arm, power, speed.

- **2. Xavier Isaac, 1B (21)** Isaac flexed his massive power. Cutting down on K's is next on the list.
- **3. Brayden Taylor, INF (22)** A smooth lefty swing and defensive versatility are plusses.
- **4. Chandler Simpson, OF (24)** Game-changing speed will be enough to get him to the majors.
- **5. Gary Gill Hill, RHP (20)** Has impressed with a strong ground ball rate and steady improvement.
- **6. Theo Gillen, OF (19)** A move from shortstop to outfield should negate shoulder concerns.
- **7. Santiago Suarez, RHP (20)** Impresses with maturity and command.
- **8. Dominic Keegan, C (24)** The Rays hope that Keegan keeps improving his defense; his bat plays.
- **9. Brailer Guerrero, OF (18)** Injuries have limited him to 35 pro games. A healthy '25 is key.
- **10. Tre' Morgan, 1B/OF (22)** High-quality at-bats have propelled Morgan up the list.

Rays Roster

President, Baseball Operations: Erik Neander • Manager Kevin Cash • Coaches: Tomas Francisco (major league field coordinator), Kris Goodman (major league process and development), Michael Johns (first base), Bobby Kinne (pitching strategist), Rick Knapp (asst. pitching and rehab), Rodney Linares (bench), Jorge Moncada (bullpen), Chad Mottola (hitting), Brady North (asst. hitting), Kyle Snyder (pitching), Brady Williams (third base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
11	Shane Baz	R-R	6-2	190	6/17/99	TAMPA BAY	4-3	3.06	14	14	0	79.1	57	27	69	
43	Hunter Bigge	R-R	6-1	205	6/12/98	Durham (AAA)	3-3	4.12	10	10	0	39.1	39	23	44	
						TAMPA BAY	0-0	2.57	15	1	1	14.0	14	3	19	
						Durham (AAA)	0-1	5.40	8	0	2	6.2	5	3	16	
						South Bend (A+)	0-0	9.00	1	0	0	1.0	3	0	2	
						CHICAGO NL	0-0	2.70	4	0	0	3.1	3	2	5	
						Iowa (AAA)	1-0	0.68	12	0	6	13.1	3	6	20	
	Joe Boyle	R-R	6-7	240	8/14/99	ACL Cubs (R)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	0	1	
						OAKLAND	3-6	6.42	13	10	0	47.2	42	40	56	
45	Taj Bradley	R-R	6-2	190	3/20/01	Las Vegas (AAA)	1-3	5.12	15	13	1	45.2	26	39	71	
						TAMPA BAY	8-11	4.11	25	25	0	138.0	122	47	154	
60	Garrett Cleavinger	R-L	6-1	220	4/23/94	Durham (AAA)	1-0	0.82	2	2	0	11.0	2	3	15	
58	Yoniel Curet	R-R	6-2	190	11/3/02	TAMPA BAY	7-5	3.75	68	0	6	60.0	52	31	71	
						Montgomery (AA)	4-0	1.75	5	5	0	25.2	16	11	37	
						Bowling Green (A+)	5-7	3.28	21	21	0	93.1	67	49	122	
29	Pete Fairbanks	R-R	6-6	225	12/16/93	TAMPA BAY	3-3	3.57	46	0	23	45.1	36	17	44	
						Durham (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	2.0	2	0	2	
						TAMPA BAY	5-2	2.67	68	0	1	70.2	59	9	63	
49	Kevin Kelly	R-R	6-2	200	11/28/97	Durham (AAA)	0-0	0.00	5	0	0	4.2	4	0	8	
	Nate Lavender	L-L	6-2	210	1/20/00	Syracuse (AAA)	0-0	3.86	5	1	0	7.0	6	7	9	
52	Zack Littell	R-R	6-4	220	10/5/95	TAMPA BAY	8-10	3.63	29	29	0	156.1	164	31	141	
18	Shane McClanahan	L-L	6-1	200	4/28/97	INJURED — Missed Season										
48	Mason Montgomery	L-L	6-2	195	6/17/00	TAMPA BAY	0-0	1.86	9	0	0	9.2	6	5	17	
						Durham (AAA)	1-7	6.26	31	14	2	87.2	105	36	105	
						NEW YORK NL	0-1	21.60	2	0	0	1.2	3	2	1	
						Syracuse (AAA)	6-1	2.92	43	0	3	61.2	43	31	84	
						TAMPA BAY	8-8	3.60	26	26	0	130.0	102	48	142	
57	Drew Rasmussen	R-R	6-1	211	7/27/95	Montgomery (AA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	3.1	1	2	7	
						TAMPA BAY	0-2	2.83	16	4	1	28.2	25	6	35	
						Durham (AAA)	0-2	8.59	5	2	0	7.1	11	0	8	
						Joe Rock	L-L	6-6	200	7/29/00	Durham (AAA)	7-8	4.58	27	23	0
39	Manuel Rodriguez	R-R	5-11	210	8/6/96	TAMPA BAY	3-4	2.15	40	0	2	37.2	29	11	34	
						Durham (AAA)	1-0	1.09	23	0	5	24.2	19	6	28	
						Ian Seymour	L-L	6-0	210	12/13/98	Durham (AAA)	4-1	2.33	10	10	0
						Montgomery (AA)	5-3	2.36	17	17	0	91.1	54	22	99	
						71	Cole Sulser	R-R	6-1	190	3/12/90	TAMPA BAY	1-0	0.00	6	2
						Durham (AAA)	1-0	2.08	9	0	0	13.0	9	2	11	
						NEW YORK NL	0-0	9.64	4	0	0	4.2	6	3	7	
						Syracuse (AAA)	2-2	1.48	24	1	2	30.1	16	16	34	
						63	Edwin Uceta	R-R	6-0	155	1/9/98	TAMPA BAY	2-0	1.51	30	0
						Durham (AAA)	1-2	5.77	22	0	0	34.1	38	16	47	
						Mike Vasil	L-R	6-5	225	3/19/00	Syracuse (AAA)	8-10	6.04	29	27	0
40	Jacob Waguespack	R-R	6-6	235	11/5/93	TAMPA BAY	0-0	5.40	4	1	0	10.0	13	10	11	
						Durham (AAA)	1-1	5.32	9	4	0	22.0	26	5	32	
						FCL Rays (R)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	1.1	0	0	3	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
41	Logan Driscoll	L-R	5-11	195	11/3/97	TAMPA BAY	.171	15	35	2	6	1	5	1	6	0
						Durham (AAA)	.292	70	260	40	76	7	37	28	61	1
						FCL Rays (R)	.143	2	7	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
19	Danny Jansen	R-R	6-2	215	4/15/95	BOSTON	.188	30	80	8	15	3	6	15	19	0
						TORONTO	.212	62	198	27	42	6	18	25	42	0
						Buffalo (AAA)	.308	4	13	2	4	1	6	1	4	0
30	Ben Rortvedt	L-R	5-9	191	9/25/97	TAMPA BAY	.228	112	290	27	66	3	31	34	88	1
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
62	Jonathan Aranda	L-R	6-0	210	5/23/98	TAMPA BAY	.234	44	128	22	30	6	14	12	32	0
						Durham (AAA)	.237	32	118	22	28	7	19	23	47	0
37	Osleivis Basabe	R-R	5-11	188	9/13/00	Durham (AAA)	.248	66	262	26	65	5	29	14	51	4
						FCL Rays (R)	.270	12	37	8	10	2	8	9	1	2
7	José Caballero	R-R	5-9	185	8/30/96	TAMPA BAY	.227	139	441	53	100	9	44	27	133	44
13	Junior Caminero	R-R	6-1	220	7/5/03	TAMPA BAY	.248	43	165	15	41	6	18	11	38	2
						Durham (AAA)	.276	53	217	33	60	13	34	16	50	1
						FCL Rays (R)	.235	6	17	4	4	3	5	5	2	0
2	Yandy Díaz	R-R	6-2	215	8/8/91	TAMPA BAY	.281	145	563	55	158	14	65	50	95	0
8	Brandon Lowe	L-R	5-10	185	7/6/94	TAMPA BAY	.244	107	385	56	94	21	58	33	112	5
						Durham (AAA)	.235	6	17	3	4	2	8	4	9	0
25	Curtis Mead	R-R	6-1	171	10/26/00	TAMPA BAY	.238	38	122	10	29	1	7	6	30	2
						Durham (AAA)	.288	91	364	60	105	13	41	29	64	11
1	Richie Palacios	L-R	5-10	180	5/16/97	TAMPA BAY	.223	92	264	46	59	5	21	45	67	19
						Durham (AAA)	.222	5	18	0	4	0	0	3	1	0
6	Taylor Walls	S-R	5-10	185	7/10/96	TAMPA BAY	.183	84	218	27	40	1	14	31	67	16
						Durham (AAA)	.381	5	21	6	8	0	5	2	6	1
						FCL Rays (R)	.118	5	17	2	2	1	1	2	2	1
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
21	Jonny DeLuca	R-R	6-0	200	7/10/98	TAMPA BAY	.217	107	332	29	72	6	31	24	77	16
						Durham (AAA)	.300	6	20	6	6	2	6	4	1	1
	Eloy Jiménez	R-R	6-4	250	11/27/96	CHICAGO AL	.240	65	229	18	55	5	16	18	47	3
						BALTIMORE	.232	33	95	7	22	1	7	4	23	0
15	Josh Lowe	L-R	6-4	205	2/2/98	TAMPA BAY	.241	106	353	37	85	10	34	32	123	25
						Durham (AAA)	.255	13	51	7	13	3	13	4	24	0
	Jake Mangum	S-L	5-11	179	3/8/96	Durham (AAA)	.317	104	398	57	126	6	56	23	73	20
26	Kameron Misner	L-L	6-4	218	1/8/98	TAMPA BAY	.067	8	15	0	1	0	0	0	10	0
						Durham (AAA)	.248	113	439	77	109	17	55	73	152	30
24	Christopher Morel	R-R	5-11	145	6/24/99	TAMPA BAY	.191	49	173	13	33	3	9	14	56	1
						CHICAGO NL	.199	103	362	43	72	18	51	47	103	7



Toronto BLUE JAYS

2025 PREDICTION
5TH
AL EAST
2024 FINISH: 5TH (74-88)

The Toronto Blue Jays opted for only a partial reset at the trade deadline last summer, and how they fare in 2025 will determine if that was prescience or folly. In Vladimir Guerrero Jr., Bo Bichette, Kevin Gausman and José Berríos, they have four elite players who can drive a contending club. But as last year's 74-88 shipwreck showed, there are also enough trouble spots on the roster to capsize a season.

No matter how things play out, there's a good chance this is the last chance for this core to fulfill the promise it showed at the beginning of the decade, with several key players eligible for free agency over the next two winters. They'll need internal improvements to help external additions get them back to the postseason.

ROTATION

Aces Gausman and Berríos along with workhorse veteran Chris Bassitt anchor a rotation that the Blue Jays feel is their foundation. Even in what was by his standards was a down season, Gausman logged 181 innings over 31 starts and posted a 3.83 ERA, while the ever-durable Berríos again made 32 starts, throwing 192.1 innings, tied for the second-highest total of his career. But between Berríos' cumulative workload (1,201.2 innings over the past seven years) and the ages of Bassitt (36) and Gausman (34), there's risk, which makes Bowden Francis' second-half emergence and Yariel Rodríguez's continued transition back to starting even more essential. Francis was one of the few bright spots for the Blue Jays in 2024, and the gains he made in the second half really must hold.

BULLPEN

The unimaginable collapse of the bullpen last year — from eighth in the majors with a 3.68 ERA in 2023 to 29th with a 4.82 ERA in 2024 — was among the prime factors that eroded the club's footing. The new group will look much different, starting with key free-agent signing Jeff Hoffman, a 2024 All-Star who had a 2.17 ERA in 68 games with the Phillies last season. Hoffman, who had 10 saves in 2024, will get a chance to close after Jordan Romano was non-tendered following elbow surgery. The returning Chad Green and Yimi García, re-signed for \$15 million over two years after being dealt at the deadline, are familiar faces. New addition Nick Sandlin adds more middle-relief/setup depth. Erik Swanson and Zach Pop will be looking to rebound, while Ryan Burr, Brendon Little and Tommy Nance will try to build upon the flashes of promise they showed while trying to help last year's crew survive the season.

MIDDLE INFIELD

The acquisition of three-time Gold Glove second baseman Andrés Giménez gives the Blue Jays infield a huge defensive boost and provides a stable partner for Bichette, who's looking to bounce back after the most difficult season of his career. That Giménez also gives the club a potential successor at shortstop



Vladimir Guerrero Jr.

Rogers Centre

Opened: 1989 • Capacity: 39,150
Left: 328' Center: 400' Right: 328'
Tickets: 416-341-1234
mlb.com/BLUEJAYS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Largest drop in strikeout-minus-walk rate (min. 130 IP), 2023-24

1. Kevin Gausman, Blue Jays -9.8
2. Zach Eflin, Rays/Orioles -7.0
3. Freddy Peralta, Brewers -4.7
4. Logan Webb, Giants -4.7
5. José Berríos, Blue Jays -4.3

should Bichette depart as a free agent after the season — or via trade beforehand — offers up an intriguing subplot. But for the offense to be productive enough for the team to contend, both players need to bounce back. Bichette's drop-off at the plate was especially jarring, as he slashed only .225/.277/.322 in 81 games before injuries ended his season. There's good reason to believe that the downturn was an aberration. But in Giménez's case, a second straight down year at the plate — he posted a .638 OPS after a .712 OPS the year before — was concerning enough that Cleveland felt compelled to escape the nearly \$100 million he's owed over the next five years. His defense alone may be worth the money, but the Blue Jays need his bat from 2022, when his OPS was .837.

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

RF	George Springer (R)
SS	Bo Bichette (R)
1B	Vladimir Guerrero Jr. (R)
DH	Will Wagner (L)
C	Alejandro Kirk (R)
CF	Daulton Varsho (L)
3B	Ernie Clement (R)
2B	Andrés Giménez (L)
LF	Joey Loperfido (L)

■ BENCH

C	Tyler Heineman (L)
INF	Leo Jiménez (R)
INF/OF	Davis Schneider (R)
OF	Nathan Lukes (L)

■ ROTATION

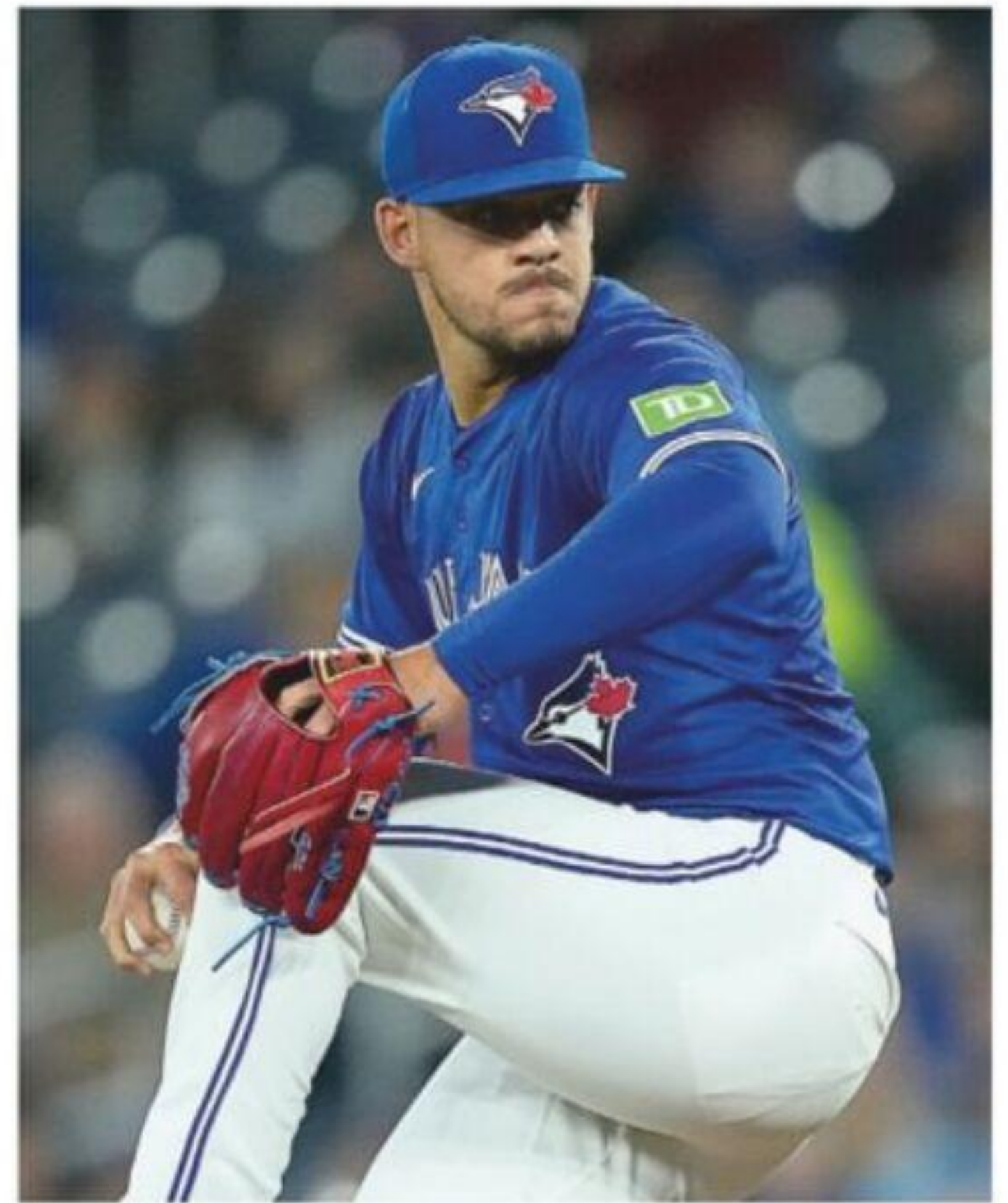
RHP	José Berríos
RHP	Kevin Gausman
RHP	Chris Bassitt
RHP	Bowden Francis
RHP	Yariel Rodríguez

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Jeff Hoffman (C)
RHP	Chad Green
RHP	Yimi García
RHP	Erik Swanson
RHP	Nick Sandlin
RHP	Ryan Burr
LHP	Brendon Little
RHP	Zach Pop

CORNERS

One bit of uncertainty was resolved in January when Guerrero inked a one-year, \$28.5 million deal. Guerrero is undoubtedly the franchise's cornerstone player. He started slowly last season, but after making some adjustments at the plate, he took off in May and kept on banging, even as he became a lonely island of production with 30 homers and 103 RBIs in an otherwise punchless lineup. His .323 average and 199 hits finished second in the American League to Bobby Witt Jr., and the Blue Jays need him to repeat that MVP-caliber production. Across the diamond, Ernie Clement forced his way into regular playing time and became a Gold Glove finalist at third base after Isiah Kiner-Falefa was traded at the deadline.



José Berríos

OUTFIELD

Both in terms of production and underlying metrics, George Springer is coming off the worst year of his career, and whether that's an aberration or a sign of decline is a key question. At 35, there's no doubt his best years are behind him, but the Blue Jays firmly believe he can be better in 2025. He'll have to be to remain in the leadoff spot and deliver some badly needed production from an outfield not certain to provide it elsewhere. Gold Glover Daulton Varsho is as dazzling a center field defender as you'll see, but his career .711 OPS puts him in the bottom half of the order. The Blue Jays seem to be headed for a mix-and-match approach in left with Joey Loperfido, Nathan Lukes and Davis Schneider, among others. Youngsters Jonatan Clase and Alan Roden could also enter the mix.

CATCHING

The starting job now solely belongs to Alejandro Kirk, who was at his best handling the bulk of work after Danny Jansen was traded at the deadline,

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE BLUE JAYS "The rotation is their strength: José Berríos, Kevin Gausman and Chris Bassitt are pros, and nobody could hit Bowden Francis for the last two months. But their bullpen was a weak spot, and Vlad Guerrero Jr. was their entire offense. They didn't get on base, they didn't slug and they had no team speed. George Springer at age 34 led the team in stolen bases — how can that be? They're very lacking in offensive depth, yet they doubled down on defense when they traded for Andrés Giménez at second base. Daulton Varsho is an elite defender, but at this point you can't expect much offensively. I do think they'll have a big bounce-back year from Bo Bichette; he was hurt and pressing, and his timing was off. He'll get off to a good start and be a strong candidate for Comeback Player of the Year."

and he now has 100-plus games behind the plate ahead of him. Kirk logged a career-high 775 innings over 99 games in 2023 and added 766 frames in 93 outings last year, so this won't be totally foreign to him. But gone for the Blue Jays is the safety blanket that Jansen provided, with Tyler Heineman, relegated to the up-and-down life of a third-string catcher the past six years, slated to be the backup, with little depth behind them. Defensively, there are few complaints with Kirk's work, as he was a Gold Glove finalist last year. But he's another player the Blue Jays need to find his past offensive form. This is a different lineup if he's the .786 OPS hitter from 2022 rather than the .692/.677 batter he was the last two years.

DH/BENCH

Knee surgery truncated what was an impressive debut for second baseman Will Wagner after his deadline acquisition from Houston, and with Giménez now in the fold at second, Wagner figures to get plenty of reps at DH. The Blue Jays would also like to cycle other players through the DH spot as a way to manage workloads, so Wagner should still get reps in the field as well. That plays into the club's hopes of optimizing more at-bats, which could lead to more active bench usage. Leo Jiménez and Schneider will be a big part of that, while Lukes figures to get some run, too, after a solid showing to close out last season.

MANAGEMENT

John Schneider heads into his third full season as manager, and he does so with some changes to his coaching staff and without the tumult that accompanied the first two after difficult postseason exits. The changes to the hitting staff are most significant, with David Popkins replacing Guillermo Martinez, but new bullpen coach Graham Johnson and pitching assistant Sam Greene also provide a new look. Pulling them all together and collectively finding ways to max out the roster should make this Schneider's most challenging year yet.

FINAL ANALYSIS

Simply put, the Blue Jays need a lot of ifs to fall in their favor if they are to succeed this season. If they play well, they'll add at the deadline to try and push this team across the finish line. If they don't, it's likely that a deeper teardown of the roster awaits.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

UNLUCKY LOTTO The Blue Jays entered December's draft lottery with the fifth-best odds of landing the top pick, but instead of moving up in this summer's talent restock, they instead slid down, landing the eighth overall selection. They last picked in the eighth spot in 1998, when they took shortstop Felipe Lopez. They've chosen higher only nine times in franchise history but have never had the top pick, selecting second in 1978 (Lloyd Moseby), 1980 (Garry Harris) and 1982 (Augie Schmidt).

TARGET PRACTICE At times during his rookie season, it seemed like Leo Jiménez wore a target in the batter's box. Pitchers hit him a remarkable 16 times in only 210 plate appearances, good enough to tie for ninth in the majors, despite only 63 games played. He was also hit 15 times in 57 games at Triple-A Buffalo before his callup and was hit 25 times in 59 minor-league games in 2021.

DEADLINE RESET Last year's pain, which prompted the Blue Jays to make eight trades in five days ahead of the trade deadline, should be the farm system's gain in 2025, as the franchise now has more prospects close to the big leagues. Infielder Will Wagner and outfielder Joey Loperfido got regular reps once they arrived and have clear pathways to the Opening Day roster, while starter Jake Bloss and outfielder Jonatan Clase are on the cusp and will likely factor at some point this summer, too.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27	28	29
				BAL	BAL	BAL
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
BAL	WAS	WAS	WAS		NYM	NYM
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
NYM	BOS	BOS	BOS	BOS	BAL	BAL
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
BAL	ATL	ATL	ATL		SEA	SEA
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
SEA	HOU	HOU	HOU		NYN	NYN
27	28	29	30			
NYN		BOS	BOS			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
				BOS	CLE	CLE
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CLE		LAA	LAA	LAA	SEA	SEA
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
SEA		TB	TB	TB	DET	DET
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
DET		SD	SD	SD	TB	TB
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
TB	TEX	TEX	TEX	A's	A's	A's
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A's		PHI	PHI	PHI	MIN	MIN
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
MIN	STL	STL	STL		PHI	PHI
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
PHI		ARI	ARI	ARI	CWS	CWS
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
CWS		CLE	CLE	CLE	BOS	BOS
29	30					
BOS	NYN					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		NYN	NYN	NYN	LAA	LAA
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
LAA	CWS	CWS	CWS		A's	A's
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
A's		ALL-STAR BREAK			SF	SF
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
SF	NYN	NYN	NYN	DET	DET	DET
27	28	29	30	31		
DET	BAL	BAL	BAL			
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
					KC	KC
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
KC	COL	COL	COL		LAD	LAD
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
LAD		CHC	CHC	CHC	TEX	TEX
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
TEX	PIT	PIT	PIT		MIA	MIA
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
MIA	MIN	MIN	MIN		MIL	MIL
31						
MIL						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	CIN	CIN			NYN	NYN
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
NYN		HOU	HOU	HOU	BAL	BAL
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
BAL	TB	TB	TB	TB	KC	KC
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
KC		BOS	BOS	BOS	TB	TB
28	29	30				
TB						

STATISTICIAN

-7.1 The swing in WAR, as calculated by FanGraphs, for the Blue Jays bullpen from 2023, when it ranked 14th in the majors at 4.6, to 2024, when its mark of minus-2.5 was easily the worst in MLB.

32 Starts made by José Berríos last year, the sixth time in seven seasons he has hit that mark, a run interrupted only by the pandemic season.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Ricky Tiedemann, LHP (22)** Electric lefty sidelined by reconstructive elbow surgery.

■ **2. Trey Yesavage, RHP (21)** 2024 first-rounder has a mature arm and a chance to move fast.

■ **3. Arjun Nimmala, SS (19)** Recovered well after a dismal start at Single-A Dunedin.

■ **4. Orelvis Martinez, INF (23)** Big power bat should find opportunity this year.

■ **5. Jake Bloss, RHP (23)** He'll vie for a rotation spot in spring.

■ **6. Josh Kasevich, SS (24)** Gifted defender started driving the ball more at Triple-A Buffalo.

■ **7. Landen Maroudis, RHP (20)** Made big velocity jump before reconstructive elbow surgery.

■ **8. Alan Roden, OF (25)** Strong contact and on-base skills; added some pop at Triple-A Buffalo.

■ **9. Kendry Rojas, LHP (22)** Threw at least six innings seven times in 10 starts at High-A.

■ **10. Fernando Perez, RHP (22)** Surprise Futures Game pick leverages average stuff with mature feel.

Blue Jays Roster

Executive Vice President, Baseball Operations and General Manager: Ross Atkins • Manager: John Schneider • Associate Manager: DeMarlo Hale • Coaches: Mark Budzinski (first base), Carlos Febles (third base), Sam Greene (asst. pitching), David Howell (asst. pitching, strategy), Lou Iannotti (asst. hitting), Graham Johnson (bullpen), John Lannan (major league mental performance), Don Mattingly (bench), Hunter Mense (asst. hitting), David Popkins (hitting), Pete Walker (pitching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
40	Chris Bassitt	R-R	6-5	217	2/22/89	TORONTO	10-14	4.16	31	31	0	171.0	180	70	168	
	Angel Bastardo	R-R	6-1	175	6/18/02	Portland (AA)	0-5	5.36	10	10	0	45.1	39	21	53	
17	José Berrios	R-R	6-0	205	5/27/94	TORONTO	16-11	3.60	32	32	0	192.1	168	54	153	
39	Jake Bloss	R-R	6-3	223	6/23/01	HOUSTON	0-1	6.94	3	3	0	11.2	16	3	11	
						Sugar Land (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	4.0	1	0	3	
						Corpus Christi (AA)	3-1	1.61	8	8	0	44.2	19	13	35	
						Asheville (A+)	1-1	2.08	4	4	0	17.1	11	8	25	
						Buffalo (AAA)	0-4	6.91	8	8	0	27.1	33	15	25	
43	Ryan Burr	R-R	6-4	220	5/28/94	TORONTO	0-2	4.13	34	4	0	32.2	29	12	47	
						Buffalo (AAA)	0-0	11.25	5	0	0	4.0	6	4	9	
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	2-1	2.16	15	0	1	16.2	14	5	29	
31	Brett de Geus	R-R	6-2	190	11/4/97	TORONTO	0-0	15.43	2	0	0	2.1	3	2	1	
						SEATTLE	0-0	2.70	4	0	0	3.1	4	0	2	
						Tacoma (AAA)	0-4	6.60	32	0	7	30.0	41	11	21	
						MIAMI	0-2	6.35	7	0	0	5.2	7	2	4	
						Jacksonville (AAA)	0-0	1.50	4	0	0	6.0	1	3	3	
60	Brandon Eisert	L-L	6-2	205	1/19/98	TORONTO	0-0	4.05	3	0	0	6.2	5	4	2	
						Buffalo (AAA)	4-2	3.86	42	4	3	53.2	51	21	66	
44	Bowden Francis	R-R	6-5	220	4/22/96	TORONTO	8-5	3.30	27	13	0	103.2	74	22	92	
						Buffalo (AAA)	3-1	0.93	6	4	0	19.1	8	3	24	
63	Yimi García	R-R	6-1	230	8/18/90	TORONTO	3-0	2.70	29	0	5	30.0	16	8	42	
						Buffalo (AAA)	0-1	10.80	2	0	0	1.2	2	1	2	
						SEATTLE	0-0	6.00	10	0	0	9.0	7	4	7	
34	Kevin Gausman	L-R	6-2	205	1/6/91	TORONTO	14-11	3.83	31	31	0	181.0	165	56	162	
57	Chad Green	L-R	6-3	215	5/24/91	TORONTO	4-6	3.21	53	0	17	53.1	41	14	46	
	Jeff Hoffman	R-R	6-5	235	1/8/93	PHILADELPHIA	3-3	2.17	68	0	10	66.1	48	16	89	
54	Brendon Little	L-L	6-2	195	8/11/96	TORONTO	1-2	3.74	49	0	1	45.2	41	19	36	
						Buffalo (AAA)	0-2	4.15	16	0	0	17.1	17	13	25	
62	Easton Lucas	L-L	6-4	180	9/23/96	TORONTO	0-0	11.57	2	0	0	4.2	6	4	2	
						OAKLAND	0-0	14.73	3	0	0	3.2	8	3	6	
						DETROIT	1-0	5.40	3	0	0	3.1	3	2	2	
64	Adam Macko	L-L	6-0	170	12/30/00	Buffalo (AAA)	0-0	9.00	1	1	0	3.0	4	3	3	
						New Hampshire (AA)	5-5	4.87	16	16	0	81.1	69	30	90	
						Dunedin (A)	0-0	1.00	3	3	0	9.0	5	2	12	
6	Alek Manoah	R-R	6-6	285	1/9/98	TORONTO	1-2	3.70	5	5	0	24.1	17	8	26	
						Buffalo (AAA)	0-2	6.50	4	4	0	18.0	23	7	26	
45	Tommy Nance	R-R	6-6	235	3/19/91	TORONTO	0-3	4.09	20	0	0	22.0	18	9	19	
						El Paso (AAA)	2-2	4.05	26	0	2	33.1	43	8	35	
	Michael Petersen	R-R	6-7	195	5/16/94	MIAMI	0-1	4.76	5	0	0	5.2	7	3	3	
						LOS ANGELES NL	3-0	6.43	11	0	0	14.0	14	8	11	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	2-0	1.64	35	0	10	33.0	17	8	44	
56	Zach Pop	R-R	6-4	220	9/20/96	TORONTO	2-4	5.59	58	0	1	48.1	45	19	33	
						Buffalo (AAA)	0-1	1.54	11	0	4	11.2	9	5	12	
52	Nick Robertson	R-R	6-6	235	7/16/98	TORONTO	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	0	0	
						ST. LOUIS	0-0	4.38	8	0	0	12.1	15	2	14	
						Memphis (AAA)	1-2	7.48	21	0	1	21.2	23	16	21	
						Salt Lake (AAA)	0-0	6.92	10	0	0	13.0	18	8	17	
29	Yariel Rodríguez	R-R	6-0	165	3/10/97	TORONTO	1-8	4.47	21	21	0	86.2	74	40	85	
						Buffalo (AAA)	0-1	1.33	8	7	0	20.1	12	13	33	
	Nick Sandlin	R-R	5-11	175	1/10/97	CLEVELAND	8-0	3.75	68	1	1	57.2	46	27	68	
						Columbus (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	1	0	
50	Erik Swanson	R-R	6-3	225	9/4/93	TORONTO	2-2	5.03	45	0	0	39.1	36	14	37	
						Buffalo (AAA)	1-1	11.34	18	0	0	16.2	28	13	17	
	Josh Walker	L-L	6-6	225	12/1/94	NEW YORK NL	0-0	5.11	10	0	0	12.1	13	6	11	
						Syracuse (AAA)	2-2	2.83	25	0	5	28.2	16	21	39	
						Indianapolis (AAA)	0-0	8.00	8	0	0	9.0	10	1	11	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
55	Tyler Heineman	S-R	5-10	190	6/19/91	TORONTO	.100	6	10	2	1	0	0	3	5	0
						BOSTON	.000	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
						Worcester (AAA)	.252	51	159	26	40	6	26	28	32	8
30	Alejandro Kirk	R-R	5-8	245	11/6/98	TORONTO	.253	103	340	23	86	5	54	35	51	0
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
47	Addison Barger	L-R	5-11	210	11/12/99	TORONTO	.197	69	208	20	41	7	28	14	60	2
						Buffalo (AAA)	.260	57	204	41	53	9	38	40	48	4
11	Bo Bichette	R-R	6-0	190	3/5/98	TORONTO	.225	81	311	29	70	4	31	20	64	5
22	Ernie Clement	R-R	6-0	170	3/22/96	TORONTO	.263	139	434	48	114	12	51	11	41	12
60	Andrés Giménez	L-R	5-11	161	9/4/98	CLEVELAND	.252	152	583	64	147	9	63	26	97	30
27	Vladimir Guerrero Jr.	R-R	6-2	245	3/16/99	TORONTO	.323	159	616	98	199	30	103	72	96	2
49	Leo Jiménez	R-R	5-10	215	5/17/01	TORONTO	.229	63	179	18	41	4	19	12	59	0
						Buffalo (AAA)	.271	57	181	40	49	7	23	30	34	3
13	Orelvis Martínez	R-R	5-11	200	11/19/01	TORONTO	.333	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
						Buffalo (AAA)	.267	74	281	54	75	17	49	27	76	0
7	Will Wagner	L-R	5-11	210	7/29/98	TORONTO	.305	24	82	8	25	2	11	4	16	0
						Buffalo (AAA)	.400	7	25	6	10	1	2	5	4	0
						Sugar Land (AAA)	.307	70	261	51	80	5	41	54	33	3
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
37	Steward Berroa	S-R	5-9	178	6/5/99	TORONTO	.189	28	37	7	7	0	1	8	14	6
						Buffalo (AAA)	.281	79	260	54	73	10	47	35	71	34
8	Jonatan Clase	S-R	5-10	150	5/23/02	TORONTO	.350	7	20	3	7	1	2	1	3	0
						Buffalo (AAA)	.244	35	135	19	33	2	11	9	38	12
						SEATTLE	.195	19	41	4	8	0	3	2	14	3
						Tacoma (AAA)	.274	59	234	47	64	10	34	40	72	26
10	Joey Loperfido	L-R	6-3	220	5/11/99	TORONTO	.197	43	137	13	27	2	9	6	52	2
						HOUSTON	.236	38	106	11	25	2	16	7	43	2
						Sugar Land (AAA)	.272	39	162	41	44	13	33	21	53	9
38	Nathan Lukes	L-R	5-11	180	7/12/94	TORONTO	.303	22	76	13	23	1	10	10	9	1
						Buffalo (AAA)	.333	54	207	30	69	7	31	22	36	4
36	Davis Schneider	R-R	5-9	190	1/26/99	TORONTO	.191	135	397	48	76	13	46	47	144	6
4	George Springer	R-R	6-3	220	9/19/89	TORONTO	.220	145	545	74	120	19	56	60	115	16
25	Daulton Varsho	L-R	5-8	207	7/2/96	TORONTO	.214	136	459	73	98	18	58	48	137	10

Chicago WHITE SOX

2025 PREDICTION
5TH
AL CENTRAL
2024 FINISH: 5TH (41-121)

Check back in 2026. Or maybe 2027. If you're looking for an American League Central contender, you've come to the wrong space.

If you're looking for a team that could threaten to exceed the franchise-record 121 losses that the White Sox suffered last season, read on. The Sox will take the field this season without their best pitcher (Garrett Crochet). They also won't get the four months they got last year from the pieces they dealt at the 2024 trading deadline.

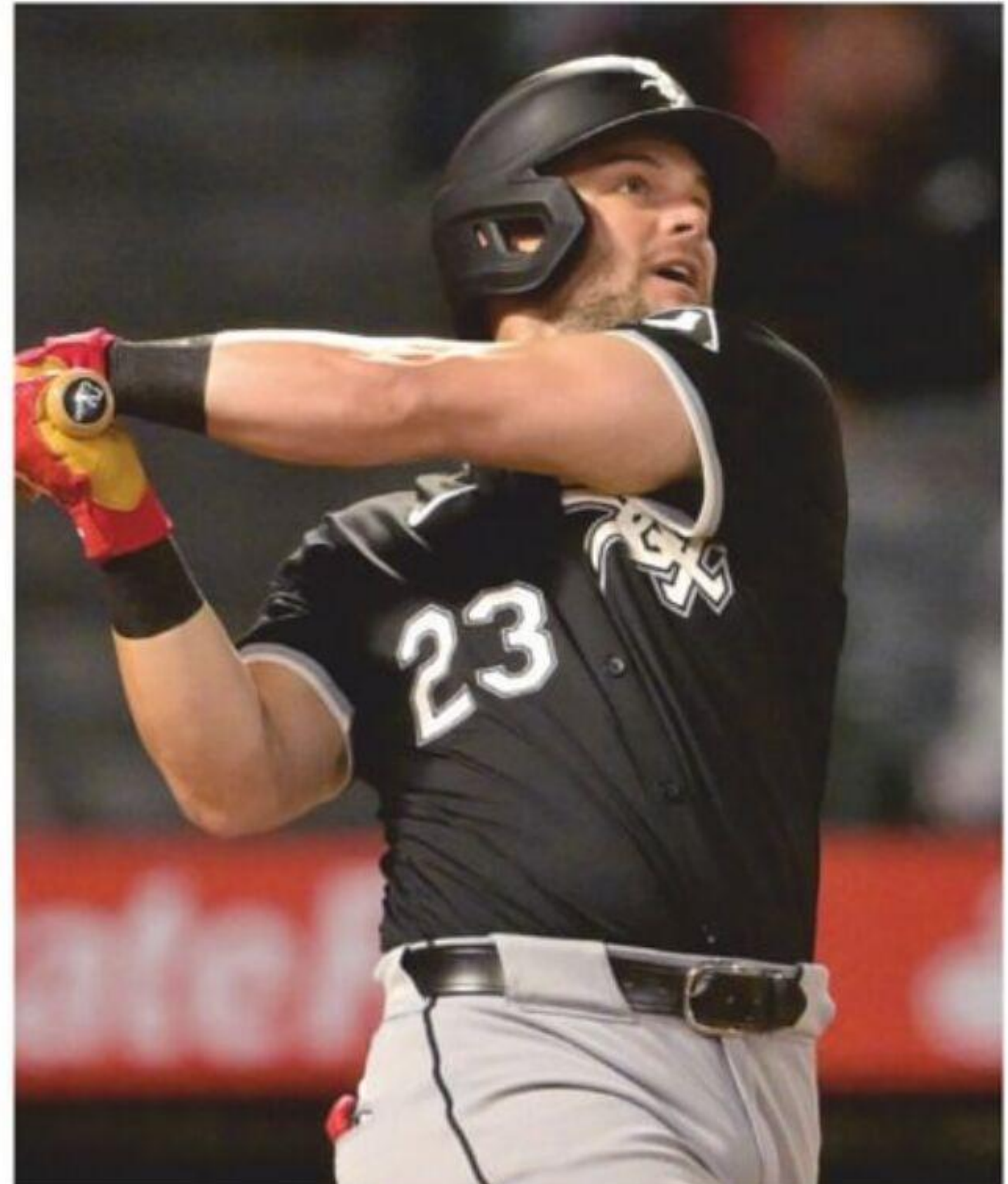
There is a new manager in Will Venable. But the management structure remains intact — and the Sox declined to spend more than \$1.95 million on any player in the free-agent market. Their farm system is in MLB's top 10, but most of the top prospects won't be ready to contribute for another season.

ROTATION

None of the five likely starters made the club out of spring training last season, which reflects the churn in the rotation over the last three years. With five wins in 15 decisions, Jonathan Cannon projects as the staff ace. He won three of his last four decisions while striking out 25 in his final 27.2 innings and has an intriguing five-pitch mix and SEC pedigree from Georgia. Davis Martin returned from Tommy John surgery and added an effective kick changeup. But he was unable to win any of his 10 starts despite a 4.32 ERA. Acquired from the Padres in the Dylan Cease trade, Drew Thorpe won three of his first five starts but missed the last two months after having a bone spur removed from his right elbow. He's another guy who relies on changing speeds. Sean Burke worked on his control issues at Triple-A before delivering an impressive September — striking out 22 in 19 innings, winning twice and not allowing more than two runs in any of his four starts. He can work in the high 90s, with the best velocity in the group. The fifth starter will likely be Bryse Wilson, a free agent from Milwaukee. Shane Smith, another former Brewer whom the Sox selected in the Rule 5 draft, will get a spring training look.

BULLPEN

After watching the relievers blow 36 of 51 save opportunities and trading Michael Kopech to the Dodgers, the Sox will rebuild the entire back end of the pitching staff. The returning players on the 40-man roster managed only five saves last season, led by Jordan Leasure, who had two but did not pitch after July 14 because of a shoulder issue. Prelander Berroa flashes velocity and a biting slider but struggles with command. Justin Anderson blew five of six save opportunities but was solid in August with a 2.03 ERA in 13 games. The lefthanders should be stronger. Fraser Ellard struck out 26 in 24 innings and did not allow an earned run in 14 of his final 17 appearances. Jared Shuster looked comfortable in the long relief role, pitching two or more innings in nine of his last 14 games. Making his big-league debut at 32 after an 11-season professional grind, Cam Booser struck out 43 in 42.2 innings for the Red Sox.

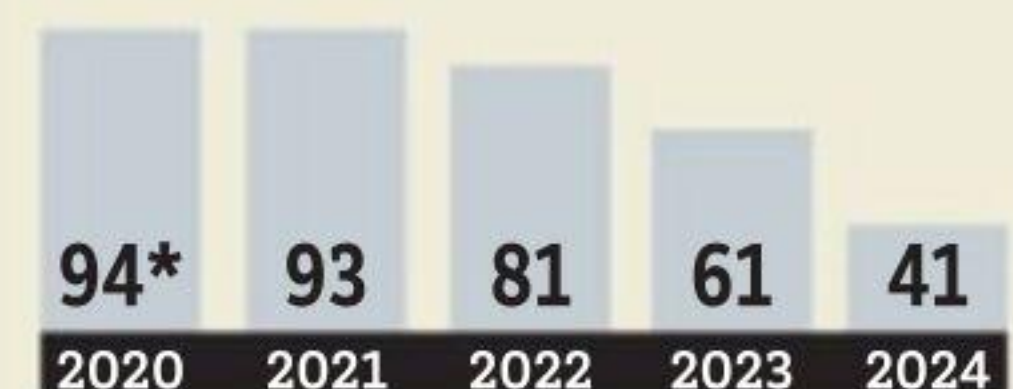


Andrew Benintendi

Rate Field

Opened: 1991 • Capacity: 40,615
Left: 330' Center: 400' Right: 335'
Tickets: 866-SOX-GAME
mlb.com/WHITESOX

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Lowest single-season weighted on-base average against fastballs, 2023-24

1. 2024 White Sox	.300
2. 2024 Angels	.313
3. 2024 Rangers	.318
4. 2024 Tigers	.319
5. 2023 White Sox	.321

MIDDLE INFIELD

As the Sox wait for 2021 first-round pick Colson Montgomery to complete his development and claim the shortstop position, Venable will be forced to juggle the middle infield without any proven contributors. Brooks Baldwin made a surprise jump to the majors, but after a solid start, he looked overmatched at the plate, managing eight extra-base hits and eight RBIs in 121 plate appearances. He'll likely share second base with former Red Sox prospect Chase Meidroth, who has on-base potential but lacks power, as well as Lenyn Sosa, who has a stronger bat but shakier glove. Baldwin can also play shortstop, where the incumbent is Jacob Amaya, who has bounced from the Dodgers to the Marlins to the Astros to the White Sox. He has one extra-base hit in 81 big-league plate appearances.

PROJECTED LINEUP**■ LINEUP**

2B	Brooks Baldwin (S)
LF	Andrew Benintendi (L)
CF	Luis Robert Jr. (R)
1B	Andrew Vaughn (R)
RF	Austin Slater (R)
DH	Mike Tauchman (L)
3B	Miguel Vargas (R)
C	Korey Lee (R)
SS	Jacob Amaya (R)

■ BENCH

C	Matt Thaiss (R)
INF	Lenyn Sosa (R)
INF/OF	Bryan Ramos (R)
OF	Dominic Fletcher (L)

■ ROTATION

RHP	Jonathan Cannon
RHP	Davis Martin
RHP	Drew Thorpe
RHP	Sean Burke
RHP	Bryse Wilson

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Justin Anderson (C)
RHP	Prelander Berroa
RHP	Gus Varland
RHP	Shane Smith
LHP	Cam Booser
LHP	Fraser Ellard
LHP	Jared Shuster

CORNERS

After more than three decades of first base stability with Frank Thomas, Paul Konerko and José Abreu, the Sox continue to look for somebody to hold down the right corner. Drafted third overall in 2019, Andrew Vaughn was supposed to be that guy. But his development was scrambled by skipping Double-A and Triple-A and then playing mainly outfield for two seasons. His OBP dipped to .297 and his WAR to 0.2 last season. Third base is more unsettled. Miguel Vargas floundered after arriving from the Dodgers. If that continues, 23-year-old Bryan Ramos will get a long look, although he's a career .257 hitter in the minor leagues with modest power.



Luis Robert Jr.

OUTFIELD

This is the team's strongest position, but it is still riddled with question marks. After making the All-Star team in 2023, Luis Robert Jr. regressed as a chase-happy hitter, striking out 84 times with only 12 RBIs in 232 at-bats in the second half. With his salary at \$15 million, Robert is the Sox' top remaining trade chip, even though his value declined because of injuries and his offensive struggles. After hitting .201 with 26 RBIs in the first half, left fielder Andrew Benintendi was the team's best offensive player in the second half, driving in 38 runs with 13 home runs. Dominic Fletcher, Austin Slater and Mike Tauchman will share right field. Fletcher is the team's best outfield defender and can also play center field. Slater (\$1.75 million) and Tauchman (\$1.95 million) were the team's two largest free-agent investments.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE WHITE SOX "I don't think they can possibly be as bad as they were last season, but even understanding that, what's the over-under for wins? The law of averages tells you they'll run into a few more than last year, but still, I think 55.5 might be a little high. When you look at the roster, there's just nothing there. Will anybody still be there by the time they turn it around? Maybe some guys from the Garrett Crochet trade, you would hope. But they had a big swing-and-a-miss on the Erick Fedde/Michael Kopech deal last year, so it's right to be skeptical of their plan. As for this year's team, Andrew Benintendi and Andrew Vaughn don't scare you at all with a game on the line, and Luis Robert Jr. will probably be traded. They'll flip Austin Slater and Mike Tauchman to a contender at the deadline; both are pretty good role players. But man, I wish I could be in that first meeting with Will Venable in spring training. He could be like Lou Brown in 'Major League' — 'Every newspaper in the country has picked us to finish last...' You know the rest."

CATCHING

Help is on the way at this position. The Sox have a pair of top-60 catching prospects in Kyle Teel and Edgar Quero. Both need more time in Triple-A, but you can expect at least one in Chicago by late June, if not sooner. Until that happens, Korey Lee and Matt Thaiss will split the job. Although he hit .210 with a .244 OBP, Lee did throw out 25 of 78 baserunners. Offense is also an issue for Thaiss, a career .208 hitter who never drove in more than 31 runs in six seasons with the Angels.

DH/BENCH

Sosa appeared to take a step forward in September, when he hit .373 with four home runs and 13 RBIs. He can play all four infield positions. Fletcher was an effective fielder as a part-time player last season but needs to improve his .252 on-base percentage. The Sox asked Ramos to work on playing the outfield during the offseason.

MANAGEMENT

Pedro Grifol was fired on Aug. 8 after the Sox won 89 of 279 games during his short tenure. Grady Sizemore finished the season, but general manager Chris Getz went outside the organization and hired Venable, formerly the Texas Rangers bench coach, to manage in 2025. Many considered Venable the top managerial candidate available because of his Princeton education, big-league experience and time spent with Bruce Bochy, Theo Epstein and Alex Cora. But until the Sox improve their player development or invest more in free agents, the roster will continue to have major holes.

FINAL ANALYSIS

This franchise will have to massively overachieve to avoid its third consecutive 100-loss season. All the former top starting pitchers (Crochet, Carlos Rodón, Dylan Cease, Reynaldo López, Chris Sale, Lucas Giolito) are playing elsewhere, and the bullpen is young and unproven. This team scored 507 runs, 97 fewer than Tampa Bay (the No. 29 team), while also finishing last in MLB in walks drawn (395), batting average (.221), on-base percentage (.278), slugging percentage (.340) and home runs (133). The struggle is real.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

PAST GLORY With the White Sox unlikely to contend for the postseason, the franchise will celebrate the 20-year anniversary of the 2005 World Series championship. The Sox have not won another postseason series since handling the Red Sox, Angels and Astros that October. Their only playoff opportunities came in 2008, 2020 and 2021. Paul Konerko, Mark Buehrle, Jermaine Dye and A.J. Pierzynski were the headliners on that team. The franchise will also celebrate Season 125.

WHO'S THE BOSS Although Rangers bench coach Will Venable was named the team's manager in November, it will be an interesting dynamic around the club because two others considered for the job will be part of the organization. Former Indians All-Star Grady Sizemore served as the team's interim manager for the final 39 games. Sizemore will return as the offensive coordinator. Another candidate, former Angels manager Phil Nevin, was hired as a special assistant for player development with responsibility for the MLB Draft.

WHAT'S IN A NAME In its 35th season, the White Sox home field at 35th and Dan Ryan has undergone its third name change. Known as Comiskey Park II when it opened in 1991, the facility was renamed U.S. Cellular Field in 2003 and Guaranteed Rate Field in 2016. In December, the Sox said the stadium would simply be called Rate Field. Team owner Jerry Reinsdorf has expressed interest in working with the city and state for a new park located closer to downtown Chicago, but politicians have been slow to get on board.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27	28	29
				LAA		LAA
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
LAA	MIN	MIN	MIN		DET	DET
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
DET		CLE	CLE	CLE	BOS	BOS
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
BOS		A's	A's	A's	BOS	BOS
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
BOS	BOS	MIN	MIN	MIN	A's	A's
27	28	29	30			
A's		MIL	MIL			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
				MIL	HOU	HOU
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
HOU	KC	KC	KC	KC	MIA	MIA
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
MIA		CIN	CIN	CIN	CHC	CHC
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
CHC	SEA	SEA	SEA		TEX	TEX
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
TEX	NYM	NYM	NYM		BAL	BAL
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BAL	DET	DET	DET	DET	KC	KC
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
KC		HOU	HOU	HOU	TEX	TEX
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
TEX		STL	STL	STL	TOR	TOR
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
TOR	ARI	ARI	ARI		SF	SF
29	30					
SF						
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		LAD	LAD	LAD	COL	COL
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
COL	TOR	TOR	TOR	CLE	CLE	CLE
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
CLE		ALL-STAR BREAK			PIT	PIT
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
PIT	TB	TB	TB		CHC	CHC
27	28	29	30	31		
CHC	PHI	PHI	PHI			
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
					LAA	LAA
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
LAA		SEA	SEA	SEA	CLE	CLE
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
CLE	DET	DET	DET		KC	KC
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
KC	ATL	ATL	ATL		MIN	MIN
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
MIN	KC	KC	KC	NYN	NYN	NYN
31						
NYN						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	MIN	MIN	MIN	DET	DET	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
DET		TB	TB	TB	CLE	CLE
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
CLE	BAL	BAL	BAL		SD	SD
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
SD		NYN	NYN	NYN	WAS	WAS
28	29	30				
WAS						

STATISTICIAN

49.5 Initial predicted 2025 win total by Las Vegas oddsmakers, 11 fewer than the next-worst team, Colorado.

24 Combined number of big-league wins by pitchers on the team's 40-man roster.

6 Number of White Sox prospects listed among the top 60 in the game at MLB.com.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



1. Noah Schultz, LHP (21) Top LHP prospect in baseball is compared to Randy Johnson.

- **2. Kyle Teel, C (23)** Teel was an on-base machine (.390) in Double-A.
- **3. Hagen Smith, LHP (21)** Smith should move fast with a powerful fastball/slider mix.
- **4. Colson Montgomery, SS (23)** Triple-A travails prompted a return to the Arizona Fall League.
- **5. Edgar Quero, C (21)** One of a pair of top-100 catching prospects with solid offensive skills.
- **6. Braden Montgomery, OF (21)** Has the highest upside of the four players the Sox received in the Garrett Crochet trade.
- **7. Grant Taylor, RHP (22)** Injuries have limited him to 19.1 professional innings.
- **8. Sean Burke, RHP (25)** Won two of three starts with Chicago, striking out 22 in 19 innings.
- **9. Jario Iriarte, RHP (23)** Great stuff, not-so-great command.
- **10. George Wolkow, OF (19)** Youngster banded 11 home runs in 76 Single-A games.

White Sox Roster

Senior Vice President/General Manager: Chris Getz • Manager: Will Venable • Coaches: Jason Bourgeois (first base/outfield), Drew Butera (catching), Justin Jirschele (third base/infield), Ethan Katz (pitching), Joel McKeithan (asst. hitting), Walker McKinven (bench), Grady Sizemore (offensive coordinator), Marcus Thames (hitting), Matt Wise (asst. pitching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
60	Justin Anderson	L-R	6-3	230	9/28/92	CHICAGO AL	1-2	4.39	56	0	1	53.1	48	32	57	
						Charlotte (AAA)	1-2	2.50	16	0	6	18.0	14	4	25	
66	Prelander Berroa	R-R	5-11	215	4/18/00	CHICAGO AL	1-0	3.32	17	0	0	19.0	15	13	26	
						Charlotte (AAA)	3-5	6.41	43	0	0	46.1	50	35	49	
59	Sean Burke	R-R	6-6	230	12/18/99	CHICAGO AL	2-0	1.42	4	3	0	19.0	12	7	22	
						Charlotte (AAA)	2-6	4.62	16	16	0	64.1	47	36	86	
						ACL White Sox (R)	0-1	6.14	3	3	0	7.1	8	5	17	
57	Ky Bush	L-L	6-6	250	11/12/99	CHICAGO AL	0-3	5.60	4	4	0	17.2	20	16	11	
						Charlotte (AAA)	2-1	7.01	6	4	0	25.2	27	14	22	
						Birmingham (AA)	5-3	2.12	14	14	0	80.2	51	32	78	
48	Jonathan Cannon	R-R	6-6	225	7/19/00	CHICAGO AL	5-10	4.49	23	21	1	124.1	125	40	91	
						Charlotte (AAA)	2-3	5.50	8	8	0	37.2	39	18	35	
	Juan Carela	R-R	6-3	186	12/15/01	Birmingham (AA)	3-3	3.58	7	7	0	32.2	25	13	36	
						Winston-Salem (A+)	4-4	3.77	16	16	0	74.0	62	32	78	
46	Jake Eder	L-L	6-4	215	10/9/98	CHICAGO AL	0-0	4.50	1	0	0	2.0	2	1	1	
						Charlotte (AAA)	1-4	9.87	9	9	0	34.2	42	27	36	
						Birmingham (AA)	2-5	5.09	15	15	0	74.1	83	31	86	
61	Fraser Ellard	L-L	6-4	220	11/6/97	CHICAGO AL	2-3	3.75	25	0	1	24.0	18	12	26	
						Charlotte (AAA)	2-3	3.76	38	0	3	40.2	34	20	59	
88	Tyler Gilbert	L-L	6-3	223	12/22/93	PHILADELPHIA	0-0	3.24	6	0	0	8.1	10	2	4	
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	4-0	2.25	31	0	7	40.0	33	8	52	
						Louisville (AAA)	0-1	13.11	7	3	0	11.2	24	6	13	
	Wikelman Gonzalez	R-R	6-0	167	3/25/02	Portland (AA)	4-3	4.73	24	19	0	83.2	59	46	92	
52	Jairo Iriarte	R-R	6-2	160	12/15/01	CHICAGO AL	0-1	1.50	6	0	0	6.0	3	8	6	
						Birmingham (AA)	5-7	3.71	23	22	0	126.0	104	57	122	
49	Jordan Leasure	R-R	6-3	220	8/15/98	CHICAGO AL	0-2	6.32	33	0	2	31.1	32	18	26	
						Charlotte (AAA)	3-0	5.59	11	0	0	9.2	7	6	12	
	Ron Marinaccio	R-R	6-2	205	7/1/95	NEW YORK AL	1-0	3.86	16	0	0	23.1	18	10	25	
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	1-3	2.04	35	0	8	39.2	25	14	41	
65	Davis Martin	L-R	6-2	215	1/4/97	CHICAGO AL	0-5	4.32	11	10	0	50.0	50	23	47	
						Charlotte (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	2	0	7.2	5	3	7	
						Winston-Salem (A+)	0-0	7.11	2	2	0	6.1	7	1	7	
						ACL White Sox (R)	0-1	3.86	3	3	0	7.0	6	1	11	
	Penn Murfee	R-R	6-2	195	5/2/94	Fayetteville (A)	0-1	108.00	1	1	0	0.1	3	1	1	
43	Nick Nastrini	R-R	6-3	215	2/18/00	CHICAGO AL	0-7	7.07	9	8	0	35.2	32	36	26	
						Charlotte (AAA)	3-9	5.29	21	18	0	85.0	83	52	98	
	Martin Pérez	L-L	6-0	200	4/4/91	PITTSBURGH	2-5	5.20	16	16	0	83.0	105	32	63	
						SAN DIEGO	3-1	3.46	10	10	0	52.0	46	17	44	
62	Jesse Scholtens	R-R	6-4	240	4/6/94	INJURED — Missed Season										
51	Jared Shuster	L-L	6-3	220	8/3/98	CHICAGO AL	2-5	4.30	39	4	0	73.1	74	33	56	
						Charlotte (AAA)	0-1	6.39	3	3	0	12.2	14	3	9	
	Shane Smith	R-R	6-4	235	4/4/00	Nashville (AAA)	1-0	2.70	5	0	0	6.2	4	3	7	
						Biloxi (AA)	5-3	3.08	27	16	1	87.2	66	26	106	
33	Drew Thorpe	L-R	6-4	212	10/1/00	CHICAGO AL	3-3	5.48	9	9	0	44.1	35	21	25	
						Birmingham (AA)	7-1	1.35	11	11	0	60.0	35	17	56	
37	Gus Varland	L-R	6-1	213	11/6/96	CHICAGO AL	1-0	3.54	19	0	0	20.1	23	4	24	
						Charlotte (AAA)	0-0	3.86	4	0	0	4.2	5	0	5	
						LOS ANGELES NL	0-0	3.00	7	0	0	6.0	7	4	3	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	2-2	7.99	28	1	0	32.2	40	13	36	
	Bryse Wilson	R-R	6-2	272	12/20/97	MILWAUKEE	5-4	4.04	34	9	0	104.2	102	31	82	
36	Steven Wilson	R-R	6-3	221	8/24/94	CHICAGO AL	1-6	5.71	40	0	0	34.2	29	26	34	
						Charlotte (AAA)	0-0	5.25	12	0	0	12.0	13	7	14	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
26	Korey Lee	R-R	6-2	220	7/25/98	CHICAGO AL	.210	125	377	36	79	12	37	17	122	6
47	Chuckie Robinson	R-R	5-11	215	12/14/94	CHICAGO AL	.129	26	70	2	9	0	0	5	20	0
						Charlotte (AAA)	.246	55	199	22	49	7	32	13	56	0
23	Matt Thaiss	L-R	6-0	215	5/6/95	LOS ANGELES (AL)	.204	57	157	14	32	2	16	28	58	3
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
27	Brooks Baldwin	S-R	6-0	175	8/15/00	CHICAGO AL	.211	33	114	9	24	2	8	6	31	4
						Charlotte (AAA)	.345	8	29	6	10	2	4	5	2	1
						Birmingham (AA)	.322	74	286	34	92	6	37	28	56	16
	Colson Montgomery	L-R	6-3	225	2/27/02	Charlotte (AAA)	.214	130	485	66	104	18	63	69	164	8
44	Bryan Ramos	R-R	6-2	225	3/12/02	CHICAGO AL	.202	32	99	13	20	3	11	7	22	0
						Charlotte (AAA)	.263	64	243	34	64	8	33	24	58	6
						Birmingham (AA)	.182	24	88	9	16	2	11	7	28	2
	Josh Rojas	L-R	6-1	207	6/30/94	SEATTLE	.225	143	422	48	95	8	31	46	108	10
17	Braden Shewmake	L-R	6-3	200	11/19/97	CHICAGO AL	.125	29	64	4	8	1	4	1	10	5
						Charlotte (AAA)	.152	10	33	2	5	0	2	0	7	0
50	Lenyn Sosa	R-R	6-0	210	1/25/00	CHICAGO AL	.254	100	351	28	89	8	35	12	77	3
						Charlotte (AAA)	.275	24	102	18	28	6	18	9	20	2
20	Miguel Vargas	R-R	6-2	205	11/17/99	CHICAGO AL	.104	42	135	11	14	2	7	17	41	2
						LOS ANGELES NL	.239	30	71	11	17	3	9	8	16	1
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.290	41	145	35	42	8	38	38	33	8
25	Andrew Vaughn	R-R	6-0	215	4/3/98	CHICAGO AL	.246	149	570	55	140	19	70	38	132	2
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
23	Andrew Benintendi	L-L	5-9	180	7/6/94	CHICAGO AL	.229	135	477	50	109	20	64	41	96	3
22	Oscar Colás	L-L	6-0	230	9/17/98	CHICAGO AL	.273	13	33	1	9	0	4	4	10	0
						Charlotte (AAA)	.246	109	402	57	99	11	51	51	107	12
31	Zach DeLoach	L-R	6-1	215	8/18/98	CHICAGO AL	.209	22	67	10	14	1	5	8	21	0
						Charlotte (AAA)	.287	97	356	65	102	6	54	48	107	20
7	Dominic Fletcher	L-L	5-6	195	9/2/97	CHICAGO AL	.206	72	223	14	46	1	17	11	58	0
						Charlotte (AAA)	.263	24	95	13	25	2	7	10	15	0
						ACL White Sox (R)	.083	4	12	1	1	0	0	1	4	0
30	Corey Julks	R-R	5-11	217	2/27/96	CHICAGO AL	.214	66	173	17	37	3	14	15	50	5
						Charlotte (AAA)	.333	7	27	6	9	1	2	5	7	1
						Sugar Land (AAA)	.266	31	124	26	33	5	15	19	27	6
88	Luis Robert Jr.	R-R	6-2	230	8/3/97	CHICAGO AL	.224	100	393	47	88	14	35	28	141	23
						Charlotte (AAA)	.100	5	20	3	2	1	3	0	6	0
						ACL White Sox (R)	.143	3	7	1	1	1	1	1	4	0
13	Austin Slater	R-R	6-1	204	12/13/92	CINCINNATI	.111	8	18	2	2	0	3	2	6	0
						BALTIMORE	.246	33	69	10	17	1	6	8	23	1
						SAN FRANCISCO	.200	43	90	12	18	1	9	16	31	2
39	Mike Tauchman	L-L	6-1	220	12/3/90	CHICAGO NL	.248	109	298	50	74	7	29	47	70	6

Cleveland GUARDIANS

2025 PREDICTION
4TH
AL CENTRAL
2024 FINISH: 1st (92-69)

The Guardians, surprise winners of the AL Central in 2024 under rookie manager Stephen Vogt, could be a postseason team again in 2025, but it depends on how healthy their reworked rotation can stay and how the best bullpen in the big leagues recovers from a year of heavy use.

There's no doubt that this is a postseason team. They've been there twice in the past three years but have been unable to get past the Yankees — losing to them in the ALDS in 2022 and the ALCS in 2024.

The offense — particularly superstar José Ramírez — will miss the protection of first baseman Josh Naylor, who was traded to Arizona in December. As soon as the Guardians traded Naylor, they signed free agent Carlos Santana to take his place at first base. The team could have kept Naylor and let him become a free agent at the end of the 2025 season. Instead, they signed Santana for what Naylor was projected to make (\$12 million). Santana will play the 2025 season at 39, while Naylor is 27.

To get back to the postseason, the Guardians need to do what they do best: pitch well, play tight defense and get big hits. They added power to that formula last season, finishing sixth in the AL in home runs after finishing last and second to last the two previous seasons. The loss of Naylor could hurt that upward trend.



José Ramírez

ROTATION

For years, Cleveland produced quality starting pitchers from its player development system. The assembly line stopped in 2024, and the rotation is still trying to recover. Tanner Bibee, Ben Lively, Luis L. Ortiz (acquired from the Pirates) and Gavin Williams could open the season as the top four starters. Former ace Shane Bieber re-signed, but he's not expected to pitch until midseason because of Tommy John surgery. Triston McKenzie and Logan Allen have had success with the Guards in the past, but they spent most of last season in the minors. Keep an eye on Joey Cantillo, who could be a contributor at some point this season.

BULLPEN

All eyes will be on Emmanuel Clase, Hunter Gaddis, Tim Herrin and Cade Smith this year to see how they respond to last year's heavy workload. They all made at least 74 appearances in 2024 while posting ERAs of 1.92 or lower. The bullpen obviously stats with Clase, who led the AL in saves for the third straight year. The Guardians have depth in rookies Andrew Walters and Erik Sabrowski, which allowed them to trade veterans Eli Morgan and Nick Sandlin in the offseason.

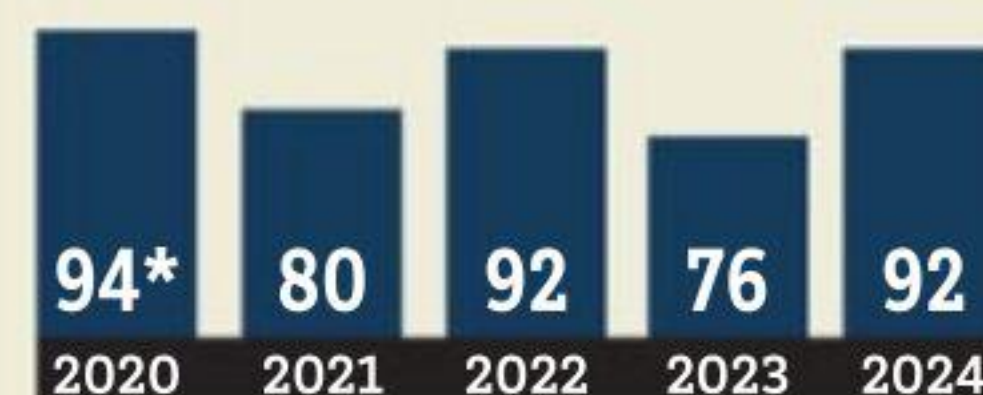
MIDDLE INFIELD

Like the rotation, the middle infield is in flux. Or at least half of it is. Brayan Rocchio established himself as a solid shortstop last season as a rookie. In the

Progressive Field

Opened: 1994 • Capacity: 34,830
Left: 325' Center: 410' Right: 325'
Tickets: 216-420-4487
mlb.com/GUARDIANS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Lowest single-season hard-hit rate, 2021-24

1. 2023 Guardians	32.9
2. 2022 Guardians	33.0
3. 2024 Guardians	33.7
4. 2021 Pirates	34.0
5. 2022 Athletics	34.1

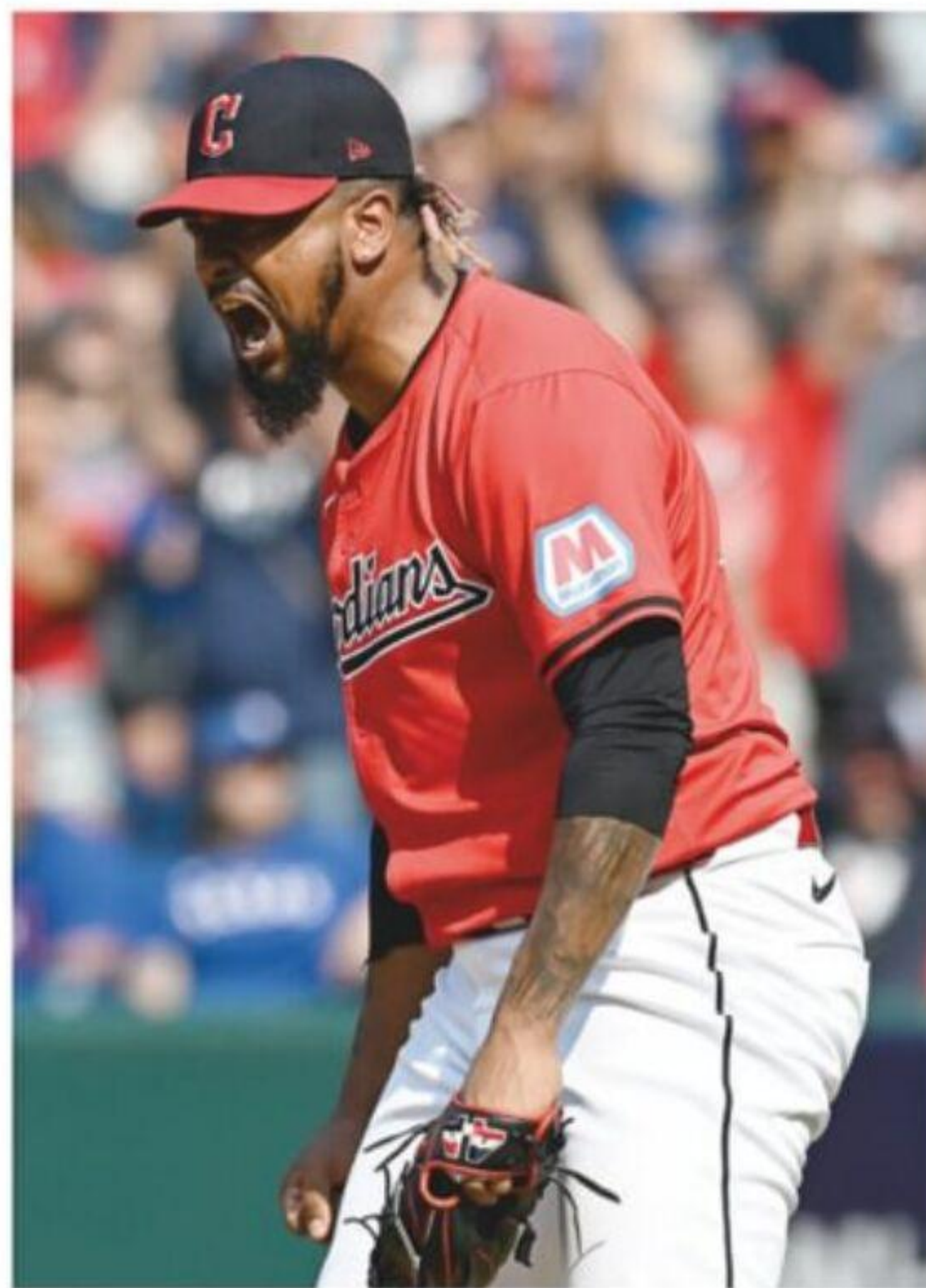
BRAD PENNER-IMAGN IMAGES

postseason, he was one of Cleveland's top hitters after struggling during the regular season. But second base is a something of a free-for-all following the unexpected trade of three-time Gold Glove winner Andrés Giménez to Toronto. The Giménez trade created payroll flexibility for the Guardians, but they don't have Giménez's defensive equal to fill the hole at second. Switch-hitter Juan Brito, who has yet to make his big-league debut, could win the job. Tyler Freeman, Gabriel Arias, Daniel Schneemann and Angel Martínez are other candidates. Travis Bazzana, last year's No. 1 overall pick, is waiting as well.

CORNERS

Third baseman Ramírez, coming off one of his best seasons (39 homers, 118 RBIs, 41 stolen bases), contin-

ues to make a case for himself as a future Hall of Famer. He is the key to the offense, the guy who makes it go out of the No. 3 spot in the lineup. Naylor protected Ramírez in the middle of the lineup for the past four years, but he's gone. Now the job falls to the switch-hitting Santana, who is making his third tour with Cleveland. Santana, 39 in April, won a Gold Glove for his work at first base last year with the Twins. Youngsters Kyle Manzardo and Jhonkensy Noel will see time at first as well.



Emmanuel Clase

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

LF	Steven Kwan (L)
2B	Juan Brito (S)
3B	José Ramírez (S)
1B	Carlos Santana (S)
CF	Lane Thomas (R)
DH	Kyle Manzardo (L)
RF	Jhonkensy Noel (R)
C	Bo Naylor (L)
SS	Brayan Rocchio (S)

■ BENCH

C	Austin Hedges (R)
UTIL	Gabriel Arias (R)
UTIL	Tyler Freeman (R)
UTIL	Angel Martínez (S)

■ ROTATION

RHP	Tanner Bibee
RHP	Gavin Williams
RHP	Luis L. Ortiz
RHP	Ben Lively
RHP	Triston McKenzie

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Emmanuel Clase (C)
RHP	Hunter Gaddis
LHP	Tim Herrin
RHP	Cade Smith
RHP	Andrew Walters
RHP	Erik Sabrowski
LHP	Joey Cantillo
RHP	Slade Cecconi

OUTFIELD

Left fielder Steven Kwan

is the one constant in the Guardians outfield. He's won three Gold Gloves and has established himself as one of the top leadoff hitters in the game. The Guardians mix and match in center and right field. They started nine different players in center field and 10 in right field last year. Lane Thomas took over center late in the year after arriving in a trade deadline deal with Washington. Noel, who was part of a platoon with Will Brennan last year, will start in right field.

CATCHING

The Guardians need Bo Naylor to improve offensively if he's going to continue to start behind the plate. Naylor hit 13 home runs last year but batted just .201 in 123 games, while his defensive metrics showed significant improvement over his 2023 numbers. Veteran Austin Hedges re-signed and will continue to tutor Naylor. Utilityman David Fry, who made 14 starts at catcher, will be missed as he recovers from surgery on his right elbow.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE GUARDIANS "For a team that got to the ALCS and had all that momentum, I don't know how they do it again. You can only pull the rabbit out of the hat so many times. I'm sure it was a shock to the fans when they traded Andrés Giménez, but it's only a matter of time until Travis Bazzana takes over at second base anyway. But I don't think they have enough offense; with David Fry out for a while after Tommy John surgery, there's only three hitters you can consistently rely on in José Ramírez, Steven Kwan and Carlos Santana. They'll have Shane Bieber at some point, and Tanner Bibee, Gavin Williams, Ben Lively and Luis L. Ortiz will be in the rotation. Joey Cantillo is the lefty option at the back end, but I really think they'd like Triston McKenzie to step up and claim that last spot. I don't think their bullpen guys will give them anywhere near what they did last year; how could they? I don't know how you have that kind of workload and leverage without a cost the next year. But they'll find quality innings from somewhere. Keep an eye on Andrew Walters; they like him a lot."

DH/BENCH

Manzardo, a left-handed hitter, is expected to be one side of a platoon at DH. He struggled with the role last year as a rookie but adjusted after being optioned to Triple-A Columbus. When he rejoined Cleveland on Sept. 1, Manzardo hit .270 (17 for 63) with five homers and eight RBIs. Fry would have been the right-handed side of the platoon, but he can't swing the bat until midseason. The Guardians have versatility in Freeman, Schneemann, Arias and Martínez. They can all switch between the infield and outfield.

MANAGEMENT

It's going to be tough for Vogt to top his first year of managing. All he did was win the AL Central and beat the Tigers in the ALDS before losing to the Yankees in the ALCS. He won the AL Manager of the Year by a comfortable margin after replacing the winningest manager in Cleveland history (Terry Francona). Vogt's philosophy of making sure every player sees the field at least once during every series went over well in the locker room. It will be interesting to see how he adjusts this year in an AL Central that is only getting stronger.

FINAL ANALYSIS

The Guardians have been the youngest team in baseball for the past three years. They get a lot of mileage out of that, constantly churning the roster to make sure their talent from the farm system isn't blocked. They get results, too, including two AL Central titles in the last three seasons. Still, the trades of Josh Naylor and Giménez were surprising, and it will be interesting to see how this season unfolds in Cleveland.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

RAIN, RAIN GO AWAY José Ramírez needed one more home run to become the first 40-40 man in franchise history. On the last day of the season, Ramirez had 39 homers and 41 steals. But he never got a chance to swing the bat because the game against Houston was rained out at Progressive Field.

THE BIG HURT After the 2023 season, Shane Bieber changed his training routine to try and bounce back from a right elbow injury. He went to Driveline Baseball in Arizona to work on his mechanics and rediscover some lost velocity. The work Bieber put in paid dividends. He started the regular season on fire, striking out 20 in 12 scoreless innings in wins against Oakland and Seattle. After the Seattle start, however, Bieber knew something wasn't right in his elbow. He underwent Tommy John surgery in April and was lost for the season.

WHATEVER SHE WANTS Emmanuel Clase, who led the AL with 47 saves in 50 chances last year, frequently dyes his hair different colors. It can range from purple to green to orange to red, white and blue stripes. Asked how he decides what colors to display, Clase said, "My wife picks them out."

LATE INVITATION When the Guardians opened the season in Oakland on March 28, right-hander Cade Smith traveled with the team, but he didn't know if he'd made the 26-man Opening Day roster or not. He was told he'd be on the team if the front office didn't make a trade or claim someone on waivers before the season started. Well, Smith made it, and it was a wise choice as the rookie went 6-1 with a 1.91 ERA with 103 strikeouts in 75.1 innings.

TOUGH GAME Lefty Logan Allen's start against Arizona on Aug. 5 could have gone better. He allowed home runs to the first two batters he faced. The next Diamondback singled, followed by a double-play grounder. Allen, it appeared, was ready to escape, but Randal Grichuk hit him in the left side of the head with 105 mph line drive that landed in center field for a single. In the second inning, he was hit in the foot by a line drive from Gabriel Moreno. "I think I've got to get rid of the baseball magnet in my glove," said Logan after the game. The next day, Allen was optioned to Triple-A.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27 KC	28	29 KC
30 KC	31 SD	1 SD	2 SD	3	4 LAA	5 LAA
6 LAA	7	8 CWS	9 CWS	10 CWS	11 KC	12 KC
13 KC	14	15 BAL	16 BAL	17 BAL	18 PIT	19 PIT
20 PIT	21 NY	22 NY	23 NY	24	25 BOS	26 BOS
27 BOS	28 MIN	29 MIN	30 MIN			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 MIN	2 TOR	3 TOR
4 TOR	5 WAS	6 WAS	7 WAS	8	9 PHI	10 PHI
11 PHI	12 MIL	13 MIL	14 MIL	15	16 CIN	17 CIN
18 CIN	19 MIN	20 MIN	21 MIN	22 DET	23 DET	24 DET
25 DET	26 LAD	27 LAD	28 LAD	29	30 LAA	31 LAA
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 LAA	2	3 NYY	4 NYY	5 NYY	6 HOU	7 HOU
8 HOU	9 CIN	10 CIN	11 CIN	12	13 SEA	14 SEA
15 SEA	16	17 SF	18 SF	19 SF	20 A's	21 A's
22 A's	23	24 TOR	25 TOR	26 TOR	27 STL	28 STL
29 STL	30					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 CHC	2 CHC	3 CHC	4 DET	5 DET
6 DET	7 HOU	8 HOU	9 HOU	10 CWS	11 CWS	12 CWS
13 CWS	14	15 ALL-STAR BREAK	16	17	18 A's	19 A's
20 A's	21 BAL	22 BAL	23 BAL	24 BAL	25 KC	26 KC
27 KC	28 COL	29 COL	30 COL	31		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 MIN	2 MIN
3 MIN	4 NYM	5 NYM	6 NYM	7	8 CWS	9 CWS
10 CWS	11	12 MIA	13 MIA	14 MIA	15 ATL	16 ATL
17 ATL	18 ARI	19 ARI	20 ARI	21	22 TEX	23 TEX
24 TEX	25 TB	26 TB	27 TB	28	29 SEA	30 SEA
31 SEA						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 BOS	2 BOS	3 TB	4 TB	5 TB
7 TB	8 KC	9 KC	10 KC	11 KC	12 CWS	13 CWS
14 CWS	15	16 DET	17 DET	18 DET	19 MIN	20 MIN
21 MIN	22	23 DET	24 DET	25 DET	26 TEX	27 TEX
28 TEX	29	30				

STATISTICIAN

11 Career home runs for Steven Kwan (across two seasons) before he hit 14 last season.

5 Number of earned runs Emmanuel Clase allowed in 74.1 regular-season innings last season.

2.57 Guardians' bullpen ERA last season, the lowest in the big leagues.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Travis Bazzana, 2B (22)**
Bazzana is the first No. 1 overall pick in franchise history.

■ **2. Chase DeLauter, OF (23)**
Guardians' No. 1 pick in '22 could make his MLB debut this year.

■ **3. Jaison Churio, CF (19)** Batted .270 and stole 44 bases in 55 attempts last season at Single-A.

■ **4. Juan Brito, 2B/OF (23)** The switch-hitter hit 21 homers and drove in 84 at Triple-A Columbus.

■ **5. Angel Genao, SS (20)** Posted an .878 OPS and 25 steals at Single-A and High-A last year.

■ **6. Ralphy Velazquez, 1B-LF (19)** Hit 10 homers at Low-A but struggled in High-A last year.

■ **7. Cooper Ingle, C (23)** Hit a combined .305 (104 for 341) at High-A and Double-A.

■ **8. C.J. Kayfus, 1B (23)** Had 17 homers and 92 RBIs at High-A and Double-A.

■ **9. Welbyn Francisca, SS/SB (18)** Was the Guardians' top international signing in 2022.

■ **10. Michael Kennedy, LHP (20)** Posted a 3.66 ERA in 18 games at Single-A and High-A.

Guardians Roster

President, Baseball Operations: Chris Antonetti • Manager: Stephen Vogt • Associate Manager Craig Albernaz Coaches: Sandy Alomar Jr. (first base and catching), Kai Correa (field coordinator), Jason Esposito (asst. hitting), Grant Fink (hitting), Brad Goldberg (asst. pitching), Caleb Longshore (bullpen), J.T. Maguire (outfield and baserunning), Brian Miles (performance), Rouglas Odor (third base and infield), Dan Puente (asst. hitting), Joe Torres (asst. pitching), Josh Tubbs (hitting analyst), Carl Willis (pitching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
92	Franco Aleman	R-R	6-6	235	6/26/00	Columbus (AAA)	1-2	1.99	24	0	2	22.2	14	10	34	
41	Logan Allen	R-L	6-0	190	9/5/98	CLEVELAND	8-5	5.73	20	20	0	97.1	113	41	79	
						Columbus (AAA)	5-3	5.36	10	8	0	48.2	49	23	48	
60	Pedro Avila	R-R	5-11	210	1/14/97	CLEVELAND	5-1	3.25	50	0	1	74.2	68	30	73	
						SAN DIEGO	1-0	9.00	4	0	0	8.0	5	6	9	
28	Tanner Bibee	R-R	6-2	205	3/5/99	CLEVELAND	12-8	3.47	31	31	0	173.2	150	44	187	
57	Shane Bieber	R-R	6-3	200	5/31/95	CLEVELAND	2-0	0.00	2	2	0	12.0	10	1	20	
54	Joey Cantillo	L-L	6-4	225	12/18/99	CLEVELAND	2-4	4.89	9	8	0	38.2	35	15	44	
						Columbus (AAA)	2-1	3.29	10	9	0	38.1	34	25	51	
						ACL Guardians (R)	0-1	33.75	1	1	0	1.1	3	2	2	
44	Slade Cecconi	R-R	6-4	219	6/24/99	ARIZONA	2-7	6.66	20	13	0	77.0	92	17	64	
						Reno (AAA)	4-2	3.06	18	5	3	47.0	34	14	54	
48	Emmanuel Clase	R-R	6-2	206	3/18/98	CLEVELAND	4-2	0.61	74	0	47	74.1	39	10	66	
94	Nic Enright	R-R	6-3	205	1/8/97	Columbus (AAA)	2-1	1.06	16	1	3	17.0	9	5	31	
66	Daniel Espino	R-R	6-2	225	1/5/01	INJURED — Missed Season										
33	Hunter Gaddis	R-R	6-6	260	4/9/98	CLEVELAND	6-3	1.57	78	0	0	74.2	43	14	66	
31	Sam Hentges	L-L	6-6	245	7/18/96	CLEVELAND	0-0	3.04	25	0	0	23.2	18	5	27	
						Columbus (AAA)	1-1	4.32	9	2	0	8.1	6	5	7	
						Akron (AA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	1.0	1	0	1	
29	Tim Herrin	L-L	6-6	230	10/8/96	CLEVELAND	5-1	1.92	75	0	0	65.2	39	25	68	
39	Ben Lively	R-R	6-4	235	3/5/92	CLEVELAND	13-10	3.81	29	29	0	151.0	139	49	118	
						Columbus (AAA)	1-0	3.24	2	2	0	8.1	5	0	4	
24	Triston McKenzie	R-R	6-5	165	8/2/97	CLEVELAND	3-5	5.11	16	16	0	75.2	69	49	74	
						Columbus (AAA)	4-4	5.23	13	10	0	53.1	54	33	56	
	Doug Nikhazy	L-L	6-0	210	8/11/99	Columbus (AAA)	7-3	2.87	14	13	0	75.1	51	34	75	
						Akron (AA)	0-1	3.17	11	11	0	48.1	31	19	49	
45	Luis L. Ortiz	R-R	6-2	235	1/27/99	PITTSBURGH	7-6	3.32	37	15	1	135.2	109	42	107	
62	Erik Sabrowski	R-L	6-4	230	10/31/97	CLEVELAND	0-0	0.00	8	0	1	12.2	6	4	19	
						Columbus (AAA)	8-2	4.38	27	0	0	37.0	33	30	53	
						Akron (AA)	0-1	0.77	9	0	0	11.2	11	2	26	
36	Cade Smith	R-R	6-5	230	5/9/99	CLEVELAND	6-1	1.91	74	0	1	75.1	51	17	103	
37	Trevor Stephan	R-R	6-5	225	11/25/95	INJURED — Missed Season										
63	Andrew Walters	R-R	6-4	222	12/8/00	CLEVELAND	1-0	0.00	9	1	0	8.2	1	5	6	
						Columbus (AAA)	1-0	2.97	33	0	6	30.1	20	17	41	
						Akron (AA)	3-0	1.35	17	0	2	20.0	13	8	38	
32	Gavin Williams	L-R	6-6	250	7/26/99	CLEVELAND	3-10	4.86	16	16	0	76.0	72	32	79	
						Columbus (AAA)	0-0	6.00	5	5	0	12.0	14	7	20	
						Akron (AA)	1-0	1.80	1	1	0	5.0	4	0	4	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
27	Austin Hedges	R-R	6-1	220	8/18/92	CLEVELAND	.152	66	132	12	20	2	15	6	50	2
23	Bo Naylor	L-R	6-0	205	2/21/00	CLEVELAND	.201	123	354	39	71	13	39	29	122	6
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
13	Gabriel Arias	R-R	6-1	217	2/27/00	CLEVELAND	.222	53	153	15	34	3	15	6	53	5
						Columbus (AAA)	.317	43	167	24	53	6	20	8	40	11
74	Juan Brito	S-R	6-0	202	9/24/01	Columbus (AAA)	.256	144	551	92	141	21	84	88	105	13
6	David Fry	R-R	6-0	215	11/20/95	CLEVELAND	.263	122	335	44	88	14	51	42	84	4
9	Kyle Manzardo	L-R	5-11	205	7/18/00	CLEVELAND	.234	53	145	11	34	5	15	9	41	0
						Columbus (AAA)	.267	83	292	65	78	20	49	61	67	3
11	José Ramírez	S-R	5-9	190	9/17/92	CLEVELAND	.279	158	620	114	173	39	118	54	82	41
4	Brayan Rocchio	S-R	5-10	170	1/13/01	CLEVELAND	.206	143	383	50	79	8	36	44	90	10
41	Carlos Santana	S-R	5-11	210	4/8/86	MINNESOTA	.238	150	521	63	124	23	71	65	99	4
10	Daniel Schneemann	L-R	6-0	185	1/23/97	CLEVELAND	.218	73	193	17	42	5	22	25	70	3
						Columbus (AAA)	.294	53	180	39	53	10	39	41	52	4
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
17	Will Brennan	L-L	6-0	200	2/2/98	CLEVELAND	.264	114	330	37	87	8	30	19	48	4
						Columbus (AAA)	.371	9	35	7	13	1	6	2	8	4
2	Tyler Freeman	R-R	6-0	190	5/21/99	CLEVELAND	.209	118	330	48	69	7	32	28	53	11
						Columbus (AAA)	.417	6	24	3	10	1	4	2	3	3
89	Petey Halpin	L-R	6-0	200	5/26/02	Akron (AA)	.233	90	356	54	83	12	45	43	95	12
38	Steven Kwan	L-L	5-9	170	9/5/97	CLEVELAND	.292	122	480	83	140	14	44	53	51	12
						Columbus (AAA)	.200	2	5	3	1	0	1	2	0	1
						Lake County (A+)	.200	2	5	2	1	1	3	1	0	0
1	Ángel Martínez	S-R	5-11	200	1/27/02	CLEVELAND	.232	43	151	16	35	3	11	15	33	3
						Columbus (AAA)	.274	55	215	36	59	7	27	25	40	5
						ACL Guardians (R)	.000	3	7	2	0	0	0	2	2	0
43	Jhonkensy Noel	R-R	6-3	250	7/15/01	CLEVELAND	.218	67	179	25	39	13	28	13	63	0
						Columbus (AAA)	.295	65	258	41	76	18	59	19	60	1
30	Johnathan Rodriguez	R-R	6-2	224	11/4/99	CLEVELAND	.129	13	31	6	4	0	5	9	14	0
						Columbus (AAA)	.301	118	439	84	132	29	94	64	128	8
8	Lane Thomas	R-R	6-0	195	8/23/95	CLEVELAND	.209	53	172	23	36	7	23	12	65	4
						WASHINGTON	.253	77	300	42	76	8	40	32	72	28
						Harrisburg (AA)	.308	4	13	2	4	0	2	3	2	2

Detroit **TIGERS**

2025 PREDICTION

2ND

AL CENTRAL

2024 FINISH: 3RD (86-76)

In the first year of the post-Miguel Cabrera era, a blistering 31-13 closing stretch vaulted the Tigers into the playoffs for the first time in a decade and altered the trajectory of a rebuild that as recently as midseason felt interminable. Along the way, lefty Tarik Skubal blossomed into a Cy Young-winning ace, left fielder Riley Greene became an All-Star-caliber lineup anchor and the outline of a sustained contender began to take shape. The next step, however, is the difficult one: filling in that outline and turning the potential into the actual. At minimum, the Tigers needed to add a veteran starter and a veteran bat over the offseason, but the signings of righthander Alex Cobb and second baseman Gleyber Torres to one-year deals felt more like bargain-hunting than the types of go-for-it moves the Tigers' fan base undoubtedly wished for.



Tarik Skubal

ROTATION

Skubal became the first Tigers pitcher to win the AL Cy Young since Justin Verlander in 2013, and he did so in unanimous fashion. With just two remaining years of control of Skubal, the Tigers' mission now should be trying to extend him. As for the rest of the rotation, the Tigers, having had success with low-risk, one-year deals with Michael Lorenzen (2023) and Jack Flaherty (2024), went back to that familiar playbook with the signing of Cobb. The 37-year-old barely pitched in 2024 due to injuries but was an All-Star as recently as 2023 with the Giants. Elsewhere, righthander Reese Olson (3.53 ERA in 2024) will hold down a mid-rotation spot, while Casey Mize, Kenta Maeda and lefty Brant Hurter provide depth. The biggest question involves top prospect Jackson Jobe. The Tigers brought him to the majors for the stretch run last fall, giving him a pair of high-stakes relief appearances in September and another pair in the playoffs. While the team is noncommittal about whether he will break camp with the big-league squad this spring, the guess here is that Jobe's talent and the team's need are too great to send him back to Triple-A.

BULLPEN

Lefty Tyler Holton's dominance as a multi-inning bullpen ace (2.15 ERA and 0.82 WHIP over the past two seasons) is so complete that the Tigers must be tempted to see what he can do as a starter. But his presence in the pen as a Swiss-Army-knife reliever, with manager A.J. Hinch pulling the strings, makes him too valuable to move. So Holton will again anchor a unit that ranked among the best in the game last year. Barring a late signing, righthander Jason Foley should once again get the bulk of the save opportunities, with righties Beau Brieske and Will Vest also back to provide depth. Lefty Sean Guenther, who was a revelation in pitching to a 0.86 ERA following an August call-up, also returns in 2025.

MIDDLE INFIELD

Torres, whom the Tigers signed in late December, never became the superstar that his 38-homer season for the Yankees in 2019 seemed to portend. But he

Comerica Park

Opened: 2000 • Capacity: 41,083
Left: 342' Center: 412' Right: 330'
Tickets: 866-66-TIGER
mlb.com/TIGERS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Lowest weighted on-base average allowed on pitches in the zone, 2024

1. Tigers	.294
2. Mariners	.301
3. Astros	.303
4. Royals	.305
5. Orioles	.306

TROY TAORMINA-IMAGN IMAGES

does add a dependable bat to the lineup (15 homers in 2024) and lends a measure of stability to an infield defense that has otherwise lacked it. Take shortstop, for example. Three years into Javier Báez's Tigers tenure, it is impossible to think of his six-year \$140 million contract as anything but a disaster for the franchise, as the veteran shortstop has slashed just .221/.262/.347 in Detroit and amassed only 1.8 WAR in that time. But given Báez's contract status, the Tigers have little choice other than to play him if he's healthy, in hopes the hip surgery he underwent in September could propel him back to his All-Star form of 2018-19. The most likely arrangement will involve a platoon at shortstop between Báez, a right-handed hitter, and Trey Sweeney, a lefty swinger.

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

CF	Parker Meadows (L)
DH	Kerry Carpenter (L)
3B	Matt Vierling (R)
LF	Riley Greene (L)
RF	Wenceel Pérez (S)
2B	Gleyber Torres (R)
1B	Spencer Torkelson (R)
SS	Trey Sweeney (L)
C	Jake Rogers (R)

■ BENCH

C	Dillon Dingler (R)
INF	Jace Jung (L)
UTIL	Zach McKinstry (L)
OF	Justyn-Henry Malloy (R)
IF	Javier Báez (R)

■ ROTATION

LHP	Tarik Skubal
RHP	Alex Cobb
RHP	Reese Olson
RHP	Jackson Jobe
RHP	Kenta Maeda

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Jason Foley (C)
LHP	Tyler Holton
RHP	Beau Brieske
RHP	Will Vest
LHP	Sean Guenther
LHP	Brant Hurter
RHP	Brenan Haniffee

CORNERS

This spring promises to bring a career crossroads for first baseman Spencer Torkelson. The No. 1 overall pick of the 2020 draft has had a longer leash than most, but three years of under-performance (negative WAR and 94 OPS+) had the team weighing upgrades at first this winter. Whether or not the Tigers pull off a move, Torkelson could be down to last chances, with no guarantees of making the Opening Day roster. The top in-house option could be Colt Keith, who a six-year, \$28.6 million extension before he debuted and showed promise as a rookie last season as the team's regular second baseman but was pushed out of that job by the signing of Torres. Keith could also wind up at third base, where the default option is a platoon between Jace Jung and Matt Vierling.



Riley Greene

OUTFIELD

Long viewed as a key part of the Tigers' rebuild, Riley Greene confirmed that status in a big way in 2024, making his first All-Star team and posting a WAR of 5.4 while toggling among any of the top four spots in the lineup. His return from the injured list on Aug. 18 coincided with the Tigers' late-season surge to seize a playoff spot. Greene struggled as a center fielder in 2023 but moved to left for most of 2024 and became a highly rated defender there. That move was pushed along by the emergence of Parker Meadows in the second half of 2024 as both a productive hitter (he hit safely in all seven of the Tigers' postseason games) and a stellar glove man in center. Right field, on the other hand, sets up as a committee effort (barring a late signing), with Vierling, Kerry Carpenter, Wenceel Pérez, Zack McKinstry and Justyn-Henry Malloy all in the mix.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE TIGERS "They tried to wave the white flag at the deadline, but their bullpen wouldn't let them. They've got a really good unit, and it's a lot deeper than people realize. A.J. Hinch really empowers them, and he's not scared to use them in any situation. Beau Brieske is one of the sneakier relievers in the league; great stuff. Tyler Holton was ridiculed down the stretch. There's some uncertainty in the rotation — will Alex Cobb hold up? Is Jackson Jobe ready? Can Matt Manning ever be a guy for them? Can Casey Mize ever catch a break, health-wise? But Tarik Skubal was the best pitcher in the majors last year, and he knows it. He's got that mentality from the first pitch until he's out of the game: 'I'm better than any hitter I'm ever going to face.' With that mindset and the stuff he has, forget it."

CATCHING

Jake Rogers may not hit much — and in 2024 he bottomed out at a putrid .197/.255/.352 — but the Tigers can live with that because of the way he defends, throws, frames pitches and (most of all) handles a pitching staff. His defensive prowess was validated with a nod as a Gold Glove finalist last fall. And he actually has shown some offensive ability in his career; he had a 21-homer season in 2023 and slugged .496 in limited action in 2021. The Tigers would love to see more of that, but even if he’s putrid at the plate, they love him behind it.

DH/BENCH

The Tigers prefer to spread the DH duties around (they used 12 players there in 2024), but the bulk of those starts in 2025 are likely to go to one of the extra outfielders, with the top candidates being Carpenter and Malloy. Dillon Dingler is likely to return as Rogers’ backup at catcher; like Rogers, he’s a far better defender than hitter. McKinstry and Andy Ibáñez both saw action at five different positions in 2024 and should return to those utility roles in 2025.

MANAGEMENT

Hinch’s Houston ties made it inevitable that the Tigers would be linked to free-agent third baseman Alex Bregman, though Bregman was still unsigned heading into the new year. The Tigers’ 2024 playoff run came in Hinch’s fourth year with the organization and in Year 2 of Scott Harris’ reign as head of baseball operations. It would certainly appear the team is in good hands with the two of them.

FINAL ANALYSIS

The AL Central has become top-heavy, with the Guardians, Royals, Tigers and Twins all harboring reasonable goals of reaching the playoffs. Detroit’s young core is as solid as any of them, and the Tigers should compete for the Central crown. But the team’s tepid initial moves in the offseason talent market left the impression that there was still much work to do.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

PAYDAY COMING The Tigers reportedly made a run at extending ace Tarik Skubal over the winter, but it didn’t go far. The Scott Boras client becomes a free agent at the end of the 2026 season and based on precedents could command well north of \$200 million on a long-term deal.

VOTE GETTER Other than Skubal, lefty reliever Tyler Holton was the only other Tiger to get MVP consideration in 2024 — a single 10th-place vote. Even if it was merely symbolic, it was well-deserved. Across 66 appearances, Horton, 28, saw action in every inning, 1 through 9, and got four or more outs 37 times.

YOUTH MOVEMENT According to Baseball-Reference, the average age of Detroit’s position players in 2024 (weighted by at-bats and games played) was just 26.7 years old, making it the fifth-youngest group in the majors and the Tigers’ youngest since 1997. The pitching staff, meantime, had an average age of 27.9, eighth-youngest in the majors.

PACE OF PLAY The Tigers played some of the crispest baseball in the majors in 2024, with an average time of game (2 hours, 34 minutes) that was second-lowest. Not coincidentally, A.J. Hinch was among the stingiest managers in the game with his challenges, using one only 23 times, second-fewest among MLB skippers.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT The Tigers still owe shortstop Javier Báez a total of \$73 million over the next three seasons, making it imperative that they get some positive value out of him. His recovery from hip surgery could delay his 2025 debut, and the Tigers hope a platoon at short with Trey Sweeney could spark Báez’s bat, as his career OPS is more than 100 points higher against lefties than against righties.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27	28	29
				LAD	LAD	LAD
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
	SEA	SEA	SEA		CWS	CWS
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
CWS	NYN	NYN	NYN		MIN	MIN
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
MIN	MIL	MIL	MIL	KC	KC	KC
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
KC	SD	SD	SD		BAL	BAL
27	28	29	30			
BAL	HOU	HOU	HOU			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
				LAA	LAA	LAA
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
LAA		COL	COL	COL	TEX	TEX
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
TEX	BOS	BOS	BOS		TOR	TOR
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
TOR	STL	STL	STL	CLE	CLE	CLE
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
CLE	SF	SF	SF		KC	KC
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
KC	CWS	CWS	CWS	CWS	CHC	CHC
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
CHC		BAL	BAL	BAL	CIN	CIN
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
CIN		PIT	PIT	PIT	TB	TB
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
TB		A's	A's	A's	MIN	MIN
29	30					
MIN						
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		WAS	WAS	WAS	CLE	CLE
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
CLE	TB	TB	TB		SEA	SEA
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
SEA		ALL-STAR BREAK			TEX	TEX
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
TEX	PIT	PIT	PIT	TOR	TOR	TOR
27	28	29	30	31		
TOR	ARI	ARI	ARI			
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
					PHI	PHI
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
PHI	MIN	MIN	MIN		LAA	LAA
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
LAA	CWS	CWS	CWS	MIN	MIN	MIN
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
MIN	HOU	HOU	HOU		KC	KC
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
KC	A's	A's	A's		KC	KC
31						
KC						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	NYM	NYM	NYM		CWS	CWS
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
CWS		NYN	NYN	NYN	MIA	MIA
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
MIA		CLE	CLE	CLE	ATL	ATL
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
ATL		CLE	CLE	CLE	BOS	BOS
28	29	30				
BOS						

STATISTICIAN

.300 The Tigers' on-base percentage, second-worst in the AL behind the White Sox.

11.7 Combined WAR for Tarik Skubal and Riley Greene, most for a pair of Tigers since 2016.

-0.3 Spencer Torkelson's WAR from 2022-24, third-worst among MLB position players in that span (min. 1,400 PAs).

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Jackson Jobe, RHP (22)** Destined for huge things (assuming good health).

■ **2. Max Clark, OF (20)** Has vast tools that have him moving quickly as a pro.

■ **3. Kevin McGonigle, INF (20)** Always owning elite contact skills, he has shown surprising power.

■ **4. Bryce Rainer, SS (19)** Lefty slugger has yet to play pro ball but is expected to move quickly.

■ **5. Thayron Liranzo, C (21)** Given his potent bat, he could be a candidate for a position change.

■ **6. Jace Jung, 3B/2B (24)** An excellent hitter, but his lack of defensive skills will limit his ceiling.

■ **7. Jaden Hamm, RHP (22)** Dominated at High-A last year (2.64 ERA, 11.1 Ks/9IP).

■ **8. Josue Briceño, C (20)** Bat is ahead of his glove, and he could move to first base.

■ **9. Hao-Yu Lee, 2B (22)** Has played plenty at SS and third, but second base is his best fit.

■ **10. Owen Hall, RHP (19)** Projectable prep arm will get his first taste of pro ball this season.

Tigers Roster

General Manager: Jeff Greenberg • Manager: A.J. Hinch • Coaches: Keith Beauregard (hitting), Michael Brdar (hitting), Joey Cora (third base), Chris Fetter (pitching), Anthony Iapoce (first base), Gary Jones (major league), George Lombard (bench), Robin Lund (asst. pitching), Juan Nieves (asst. pitching), Ryan Sienko (catching), Lance Zawadzki (asst. hitting)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
4	Beau Brieske	R-R	6-3	200	4/4/98	DETROIT	4-5	3.59	46	12	1	67.2	55	30	69	
						Toledo (AAA)	1-0	2.95	13	0	3	21.1	19	11	22	
38	Alex Cobb	R-R	6-3	205	10/7/87	CLEVELAND	2-1	2.76	3	3	0	16.1	14	3	10	
						Columbus (AAA)	0-0	1.93	1	1	0	4.2	3	2	5	
						Sacramento (AAA)	1-0	0.00	1	1	0	5.0	2	1	4	
						San Jose (A)	0-1	6.30	4	4	0	10.0	12	4	17	
						ACL Giants (R)	0-0	2.70	1	1	0	3.1	3	2	3	
53	Mason Englert	S-R	6-4	206	11/1/99	DETROIT	1-0	5.40	12	1	0	21.2	23	5	16	
						Toledo (AAA)	3-1	3.24	28	2	0	41.2	33	14	60	
						West Michigan (A+)	1-0	1.69	2	1	0	5.1	3	2	5	
						Lakeland (A)	0-1	3.38	2	2	0	2.2	3	2	2	
49	Alex Faedo	R-R	6-5	225	11/12/95	DETROIT	5-3	3.61	37	6	0	57.1	49	28	55	
						Toledo (AAA)	0-0	3.00	3	1	0	3.0	4	4	4	
68	Jason Foley	R-R	6-4	215	11/1/95	DETROIT	3-6	3.15	69	0	28	60.0	51	20	46	
66	Sawyer Gipson-Long	R-R	6-4	225	12/12/97	Lakeland (A)	0-0	3.00	1	1	0	3.0	3	0	4	
73	Sean Guenther	L-L	5-11	194	12/29/95	DETROIT	3-0	0.86	17	0	0	21.0	9	2	12	
						Toledo (AAA)	4-4	3.31	39	2	3	51.2	51	15	52	
75	Brenan Hanifree	R-R	6-5	215	5/29/98	DETROIT	1-1	1.84	21	3	0	29.1	27	6	23	
						Toledo (AAA)	1-2	5.17	34	0	1	47.0	47	14	53	
87	Tyler Holton	L-L	6-2	200	6/13/96	DETROIT	7-2	2.19	66	9	8	94.1	57	17	77	
	Bailey Horn	L-L	6-2	210	1/15/98	BOSTON	1-1	6.50	18	0	0	18.0	22	10	13	
						Worcester (AAA)	3-2	2.15	21	1	3	29.1	17	14	35	
						Charlotte (AAA)	1-1	11.32	9	0	0	10.1	14	10	15	
48	Brant Hurter	L-L	6-6	250	9/6/98	DETROIT	6-1	2.58	10	1	0	45.1	34	6	38	
						Toledo (AAA)	2-4	5.80	19	18	0	71.1	82	23	70	
21	Jackson Jobe	R-R	6-2	190	7/30/02	DETROIT	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	4.0	1	1	2	
						Toledo (AAA)	1-0	6.00	2	2	0	9.0	12	5	7	
						Erie (AA)	4-2	1.95	16	16	0	73.2	42	38	81	
						West Michigan (A+)	0-1	2.00	3	3	0	9.0	4	2	8	
55	Alex Lange	R-R	6-3	202	10/2/95	DETROIT	0-3	4.34	21	0	2	18.2	16	17	21	
						Toledo (AAA)	1-1	3.12	9	0	0	8.2	7	1	12	
65	Chase Lee	R-R	6-0	170	8/13/98	Toledo (AAA)	1-3	3.27	17	0	0	22.0	23	4	31	
						Round Rock (AAA)	0-0	1.69	8	0	0	10.2	12	7	11	
						ACL Rangers (R)	1-0	2.70	3	1	0	3.1	4	0	7	
36	Ty Madden	R-R	6-3	215	2/21/00	DETROIT	1-1	4.30	6	1	0	23.0	25	8	17	
						Toledo (AAA)	3-5	7.97	18	18	0	79.0	100	40	102	
						Erie (AA)	0-0	2.55	4	4	0	17.2	11	3	22	
18	Kenta Maeda	R-R	6-1	185	4/11/88	DETROIT	3-7	6.09	29	17	0	112.1	124	31	96	
						Toledo (AAA)	0-0	3.00	1	1	0	3.0	3	0	6	
15	Matt Manning	R-R	6-6	195	1/28/98	DETROIT	0-1	4.88	5	5	0	27.2	31	12	23	
						Toledo (AAA)	2-5	4.28	15	14	0	69.1	64	25	72	
59	Tyler Mattison	R-R	6-4	235	9/5/99	INJURED — Missed Season										
12	Casey Mize	R-R	6-3	212	5/1/97	DETROIT	2-6	4.49	22	20	0	102.1	121	29	78	
						Toledo (AAA)	0-0	2.63	4	4	0	13.2	10	4	17	
54	Keider Montero	R-R	6-1	145	7/6/00	DETROIT	6-6	4.76	19	16	0	98.1	100	31	77	
						Toledo (AAA)	1-4	5.03	13	13	0	48.1	52	30	54	
45	Reese Olson	R-R	6-1	160	7/31/99	DETROIT	4-8	3.53	22	22	0	112.1	100	33	101	
						Toledo (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	2	0	5.0	2	2	6	
62	Tyler Owens	R-R	5-10	185	1/9/01	Erie (AA)	1-3	3.31	13	0	2	16.1	13	7	20	
						Frisco (AA)	2-0	2.80	26	0	8	35.1	33	9	35	
29	Tarik Skubal	R-L	6-3	240	11/20/96	DETROIT	18-4	2.39	31	31	0	192.0	142	35	228	
19	Will Vest	R-R	6-0	180	6/6/95	DETROIT	3-4	2.82	69	0	2	70.1	61	18	63	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
13	Dillon Dingler	R-R	6-2	210	9/17/98	DETROIT	.167	27	84	2	14	1	11	3	30	0
						Toledo (AAA)	.308	71	263	44	81	17	52	30	61	5
34	Jake Rogers	R-R	6-1	201	4/18/95	DETROIT	.197	102	310	43	61	10	36	22	99	1
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
28	Javier Báez	R-R	6-0	190	12/1/92	DETROIT	.184	80	272	25	50	6	37	12	69	8
						Toledo (AAA)	.333	4	12	3	4	1	1	1	3	0
77	Andy Ibáñez	R-R	5-10	205	4/3/93	DETROIT	.241	99	224	30	54	5	32	15	63	2
						Toledo (AAA)	.333	3	9	1	3	0	1	0	1	0
17	Jace Jung	L-R	6-0	205	10/4/00	DETROIT	.241	34	79	14	19	0	3	15	29	0
						Toledo (AAA)	.257	91	339	50	87	14	60	67	93	2
						Lakeland (A)	.300	4	10	3	3	1	3	4	2	1
33	Colt Keith	L-R	6-2	211	8/14/01	DETROIT	.260	148	516	54	134	13	61	36	110	7
32	Ryan Kreidler	R-R	6-4	208	11/12/97	DETROIT	.119	35	59	9	7	1	2	6	19	5
						Toledo (AAA)	.200	48	170	20	34	5	14	25	59	7
						Lakeland (A)	.100	7	20	0	2	0	0	1	11	0
39	Zach McKinstry	L-R	6-0	180	4/29/95	DETROIT	.215	118	297	32	64	4	23	24	69	16
27	Trey Sweeney	L-R	6-3	212	4/24/00	DETROIT	.218	36	110	11	24	4	17	7	32	2
						Toledo (AAA)	.381	11	42	9	16	2	9	5	12	4
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.254	96	389	65	99	13	62	44	118	16
20	Spencer Torkelson	R-R	6-0	220	8/26/99	DETROIT	.219	92	342	45	75	10	37	33	105	0
						Toledo (AAA)	.239	58	226	41	54	11	43	42	85	1
25	Gleyber Torres	R-R	6-1	205	12/13/96	NEW YORK AL	.257	154	587	80	151	15	63	65	136	4
8	Matt Vierling	R-R	6-3	205	9/16/96	DETROIT	.257	144	518	80	133	16	57	41	121	6
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
30	Kerry Carpenter	L-R	6-2	220	9/2/97	DETROIT	.284	87	264	37	75	18	57	22	75	0
						Toledo (AAA)	.214	4	14	2	3	0	2	1	5	0
31	Riley Greene	L-L	6-3	200	9/28/00	DETROIT	.262	137	512	82	134	24	74	64	156	4
						Toledo (AAA)	.167	2	6	0	1	0	2	0	1	0
44	Justyn-Henry Malloy	R-R	6-1	212	2/19/00	DETROIT	.203	71	202	18	41	8	21	23	85	1
						Toledo (AAA)	.258	55	186	27	48	7	31	43	66	3
22	Parker Meadows	L-R	6-5	205	11/2/99	DETROIT	.244	82	270	39	66	9	28	25	76	9
						Toledo (AAA)	.292	51	202	39	59	8	25	30	45	19
46	Wenceel Pérez	S-R	5-10	203	10/30/99	DETROIT	.242	112	389	51	94	9	37	32	92	9
						Toledo (AAA)	.164	15	55	10	9	2	8	8	15	4



Kansas City ROYALS

2025 PREDICTION

1ST

AL CENTRAL

2024 FINISH: 2ND (86-76)

Led by unanimous AL MVP runner-up Bobby Witt Jr., the Royals reached the playoffs ahead of schedule last season with the shortstop emerging as a generational talent and general manager J.J. Picollo rebuilding the rotation with some savvy signings. Manager Matt Quatraro's club is hungry for more in 2025 — and should be. The top of Kansas City's rotation is among the best in baseball, and the heart of its lineup returns, so the Royals should expect to compete for the AL Central title and October glory if the retooled bullpen holds up and a few positions — notably the corner outfield spots — bounce back from lackluster seasons.

ROTATION

Lefthander Cole Ragans (11-9, 3.14) and righthander Seth Lugo (16-9, 3.00) anchor a Royals rotation that led the greatest turnaround in franchise history — improving 30 games from 2023 to 2024. Kansas City's starting pitching led MLB with a 10.3 WAR last season, according to Baseball Reference. Lugo, 35, a crafty veteran with an endless arsenal of pitches, was the AL Cy Young Award runner-up, and the fireballing Ragans, 27, finished fourth. Michael Wacha (13-8, 3.35) re-upped for three years at \$51 million — an early offseason steal for Picollo — giving the Royals a formidable trio of frontline starters. Keeping Michael Lorenzen (7-6, 3.31), who posted a 1.57 ERA in seven appearances after arriving via trade with Texas last summer, helps fill the hole the Brady Singer trade left in the rotation. Lefty Kris Bubic (1-1, 2.67 ERA), who was used exclusively from the bullpen after his midseason return from Tommy John surgery last season, probably gets first crack at the fifth spot. Bubic, 27, struck out 39 and walked five in 30.1 innings in 2024, an encouraging sign of his fitness for the rotation. Alec Marsh (9-9, 4.53), who drastically cut down his walks and was serviceable in that role last season, or Kyle Wright, who led the majors in wins (21) with the Braves three years ago but missed most of the last two seasons amid shoulder surgery, could challenge Bubic for the job.

BULLPEN

The back end of the Royals' bullpen, which got retooled at the trade deadline, returns largely intact. Kansas City's relief corps ranked 19th overall and 11th among the 12 playoff teams in ERA last season (4.13) but improved during the final two months after Lucas Erceg (2.88 ERA, 11 saves for the Royals) arrived via trade with Oakland and took over as closer. Erceg projects as a long-term anchor with lefty Angel Zerpa (2-0, 3.86) and John Schreiber (4-3, 3.66) reprising their setup roles. Sam Long (3-3, 3.16) and Carlos Hernández (0-1, 3.30) also proved to be effective options. Bubic, Marsh or Wright could be long-relief/spot starter options along with Daniel Lynch IV (2-0, 3.32), who thrived in the role last season. Hunter Harvey (2-4, 4.44 in 2024), another trade-deadline pickup, could be in the mix for a setup role if he's recovered from a back injury that shut him down late last season. Same with James McArthur, who led Kansas City with 18 saves last season but was shut down in September with a UCL sprain.



Bobby Witt Jr.

Kauffman Stadium

Opened: 1973 • Capacity: 37,903
Left: 330' Center: 410' Right: 330'
Tickets: 800-676-9257
mlb.com/ROYALS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Fastest single-season sprint speed, 2023-24

1. 2024 Bobby Witt Jr., Royals 30.5
1. 2023 Bobby Witt Jr., Royals 30.5
1. 2023 Elly De La Cruz, Reds 30.5
4. 2023 Dairon Blanco, Royals 30.3
4. 2023 Trea Turner, Phillies 30.3

MIDDLE INFIELD

Witt put together a season for the ages, leading the majors in hits (211) and average (.332), with career highs for doubles (45), home runs (32) and RBIs (109). His strikeouts were down, his walks were up and he tied his career-best with 11 triples while recording the Royals' first 30-30 season (31 SB). Hoping to get more traffic on the bases in front of Witt, the Royals dealt Singer to Cincinnati for second baseman Jonathan India and outfielder Joey Wiemer, but India may be better suited at DH. The Royals' incumbent at second, Michael Massey, slugged .449 last season, which ranked third on the club, and his OPS climbed 88 points in his third big-league season. He'll need to keep ascending to bolster the middle of Kansas City's batting order.

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

DH	Jonathan India (R)
SS	Bobby Witt Jr. (R)
1B	Vinnie Pasquantino (L)
C	Salvador Perez (R)
2B	Michael Massey (L)
RF	Hunter Renfroe (R)
LF	MJ Melendez (L)
3B	Maikel Garcia (R)
CF	Kyle Isbel (L)

■ BENCH

C	Freddy Fermin (R)
OF	Joey Wiemer (R)
2B	Nick Loftin (R)
OF	Dairon Blanco (R)

■ ROTATION

LHP	Cole Ragans
RHP	Seth Lugo
RHP	Michael Wacha
LHP	Kris Bubic
RHP	Michael Lorenzen

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Lucas Erceg (C)
RHP	John Schreiber
LHP	Angel Zerpa
RHP	Kyle Wright
RHP	Carlos Hernández
LHP	Sam Long
LHP	Daniel Lynch IV
RHP	Alec Marsh

CORNERS

First baseman Vinnie Pasquantino is the Royals' most productive and feared bat behind Witt and catcher Salvador Perez. "Pasquatch" has 30-home run potential if he can stay healthy and catch a few more barrels in his age-27 season. Third baseman Maikel Garcia's career trajectory nosedived — from a promising .272/.323/.358 rookie campaign to a .231/.281/.332 eyesore last season. Garcia led the Royals with 37 steals and played adequate defense, but the inability to consistently get on base forced the club to trade for India and could hinder his long-term prospects.

OUTFIELD

Kansas City's lack of production from the corner outfield spots was a big reason the offense was pedestrian in 2024.

Left fielder MJ Melendez cut down his strikeout rate (25.1 percent), though it remained higher than league average, but he also walked less and bottomed out when putting the ball in play (.206/.273/.400). Throw in below-average defense from Melendez and right fielder Hunter Renfroe, who slashed .229/.297/.392, and it's not hard to understand why the Royals' outfield collectively posted a minus-4.3 Wins Above Average, which ranked 25th overall. Center fielder Kyle Isbel remains a below-average hitter (83 OPS+, per BR). His value comes on defense, patrolling "The K's" cavernous outfield. Both players acquired in the Singer trade, Wiemer and India, could elbow into the outfield mix if Melendez and/or Renfroe scuffle again.



Cole Ragans

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE ROYALS "They know how to win now, and Jonathan India's gonna love hitting in front of Salvy Perez. It feels like we've been watching him for 20 years; I don't know how he does it, but he just loves to play. Bobby Witt Jr. is so calm as the focal point of that franchise, and so consistent on and off the field. And what a joy to watch him run. On TV, you can tell he's fast. But to watch him live, you just see a whole other gear. There's a completely different feel to that team when Vinnie Pasquantino is in the lineup; they really look to him. The lineup has some dead spots, but they have some grinders and their pitching keeps them in games. I'm OK with them trading Brady Singer because Alec Marsh showed enough swing-and-miss to be a solid No. 4 guy. Seth Lugo and Michael Wacha mean so much to that staff, and I think Cole Ragans has a chance to take that next step. He's like Jacob deGrom from the left side, with the way his ball rides. Lucas Erceg was a masterful pickup for the back of that bullpen, and John Schreiber should get more credit for snuffing out rallies like he does."

CATCHING

Perez, a nine-time All-Star, turns 35 in May, but he’s coming off his best season since 2021, when he led the majors in home runs (48) and RBIs (121). Perez started 90 games behind the plate in 2024, tying his career high for doubles (28) and posting 27 home runs and a .271/.330/.456 slash line while platooning with Freddy Fermin, who started 72 games at catcher last season. Fermin is a solid defender and game-caller with some pop (14 doubles, six homers).

DH/BENCH

India’s main value, given his defensive shortcomings, will be as a table-setter for Witt. Among second basemen last season, he had the best walk rate (12.6 percent) and second-best OBP (.357), so he can be an effective, if unconventional, DH. Perez and Pasquantino also will need occasional at-bats at DH, so India could see time at second and is open to exploring left field. Meanwhile, Nick Loftin has yet to show a consistent big-league bat, but he’s versatile and athletic, making him a super-utility player. Outfielder Dairon Blanco, who had 31 steals despite starting only 34 games, provides speed and defense.

MANAGEMENT

In the era of \$700 million contracts, Kansas City remains constrained by the realities of small-market baseball and MLB’s unbalanced financial model, but the Royals’ brass isn’t whining about it. Picollo believes he can build a championship club around Witt despite having a smaller payroll and little margin for error in free agency. Kansas City has some quality building blocks, and Quatraro’s even-keeled approach suits the clubhouse.

FINAL ANALYSIS

Is it World Series-or-bust for the Royals? That’s probably not fair, but anything short of another postseason berth will be disappointing. Kansas City can’t afford any rotation attrition/regression, and the lineup needs to step up around Witt, but the club has shown it can compete for a crown.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

‘WITTING’ NUPTIALS Bobby Witt Jr. married his high school sweetheart, Maggie Black, during the offseason. The reception included a custom, fully functional “Wittaburger,” which celebrated the Texas-based fast-food burger chain Whataburger. Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes, a fellow east Texas native, helped bring Whataburger to Kansas City more than three years ago.

REFRAMING PEREZ’S DEFENSE Salvador Perez ranked 37th among 58 qualifying catchers in Catcher Framing Runs last season (-2), according to Baseball Savant. It doesn’t sound great, but it’s actually a magnificent improvement considering that Perez finished last three times and in the bottom four six times in his seven non-COVID seasons — he missed 2019 with an elbow injury — since tracking began in 2015. Before last season, Perez’s average finish was 59th at minus-12.6 Catcher Framing Runs during that span.

NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTION Let’s be honest — New Year’s resolutions seldom work out, so maybe this isn’t a good thing. But affable Royals first baseman Vinnie Pasquantino had a succinct resolution for 2025 when asked in a December interview with MLB Network Radio: “Win a World Series.” That’s a resolution Kansas City will hope Pasquatch can keep.

BROADCASTING DEAL Diamond Sports Group’s bankruptcy proceedings were a curious offseason subplot. The Royals, whose streaming subscriber base enjoyed the biggest growth in MLB last season, were one of the last teams to make a decision about their broadcasting deal for 2025 — ultimately opting to stick with the rebranded FanDuel Sports Network Kansas City. But fans also will have a new option: an Amazon Prime Video add-on subscription next season.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27 CLE	28	29 CLE
30 CLE	31 MIL	1 MIL	2 MIL	3	4 BAL	5 BAL
6 BAL	7 MIN	8 MIN	9 MIN	10 MIN	11 CLE	12 CLE
13 CLE	14 NYY	15 NYY	16 NYY	17 DET	18 DET	19 DET
20 DET	21	22 COL	23 COL	24 COL	25 HOU	26 HOU
27 HOU	28	29 TB	30 TB			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 TB	2 BAL	3 BAL
4 BAL	5 CWS	6 CWS	7 CWS	8 CWS	9 BOS	10 BOS
11 BOS	12 HOU	13 HOU	14 HOU	15	16 STL	17 STL
18 STL	19 SF	20 SF	21 SF	22	23 MIN	24 MIN
25 MIN	26 CIN	27 CIN	28 CIN	29	30 DET	31 DET
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 DET	2	3 STL	4 STL	5 STL	6 CWS	7 CWS
8 CWS	9	10 NYY	11 NYY	12 NYY	13 A's	14 A's
15 A's	16	17 TEX	18 TEX	19 TEX	20 SD	21 SD
22 SD	23	24 TB	25 TB	26 TB	27 LAD	28 LAD
29 LAD	30 SEA					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 SEA	2 SEA	3 SEA	4 ARI	5 ARI
6 ARI	7 PIT	8 PIT	9 PIT	10	11 NYM	12 NYM
13 NYM	14	15 ALL-STAR BREAK	16	17	18 MIA	19 MIA
20 MIA	21 CHC	22 CHC	23 CHC	24	25 CLE	26 CLE
27 CLE	28 ATL	29 ATL	30 ATL	31		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 TOR	2 TOR
3 TOR	4 BOS	5 BOS	6 BOS	7	8 MIN	9 MIN
10 MIN	11 WAS	12 WAS	13 WAS	14	15 CWS	16 CWS
17 CWS	18 TEX	19 TEX	20 TEX	21 TEX	22 DET	23 DET
24 DET	25 CWS	26 CWS	27 CWS	28	29 DET	30 DET
31 DET						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2 LAA	3 LAA	4 LAA	5 MIN	6 MIN
7 MIN	8 CLE	9 CLE	10 CLE	11 CLE	12 PHI	13 PHI
14 PHI	15	16 SEA	17 SEA	18 SEA	19 TOR	20 TOR
21 TOR	22	23 LAA	24 LAA	25 LAA	26 A's	27 A's
28 A's	29	30				

STATISTICIAN

10.4 Bobby Witt Jr.'s all-time franchise-best Fan-Graphs WAR last season, which ranked second in MLB.

1 Other shortstops with a 10+ WAR since 1950, according to Fan-Graphs (Cal Ripken Jr., 1991).

3 Other position players with a 10+ WAR in the last 20 years, according to FanGraphs (Aaron Judge, Mookie Betts, Mike Trout).

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Jac Caglianone, 1B/LHP (22)** Rising two-way star has tantalizing raw power.

■ **2. Blake Mitchell, C (20)** Needs to get his K rate (30.7% in '24) down to reach his potential.

■ **3. Carter Jensen, C (21)** Bumped his slash line at High-A to .271/.386/.436 in 2024.

■ **4. Ben Kudrna, RHP (22)** Struck out 119 with 53 walks in 115.1 innings.

■ **5. Blake Wolters, RHP (20)** His fastball sits in the mid-90s.

■ **6. Gavin Cross, OF (24)** Had 34 extra-base hits at Double-A.

■ **7. David Shields, LHP (18)** Possesses athleticism and swing-and-miss stuff.

■ **8. Noah Cameron, LHP (25)** Had 149 Ks, 36 BBs and a 3.08 ERA in 128.2 IP.

■ **9. Yandel Ricardo, SS (18)** The switch-hitting teen has project-able power.

■ **10. Javier Vaz, 2B/OF (24)** A high-contact hitter who has more walks than strikeouts.

Royals Roster

Executive Vice President and General Manager: J.J. Picollo • Manager: Matt Quatraro • Coaches: José Alguacil (infield), Zach Bove (asst. pitching), Keoni DeRenne (asst. hitting), Joe Dillon (asst. hitting), Miguel Garcia, Damon Hollins (first base), Paul Hoover (bench), Mitch Stetter (bullpen), Brian Sweeney (pitching), Vance Wilson (third base), Alec Zumwalt (hitting)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
	Luinder Avila	R-R	6-3	195	8/21/01	Omaha (AAA)	0-0	10.38	1	1	0	4.1	5	4	3	
						NW Arkansas (AA)	6-5	3.81	19	19	0	82.2	71	43	82	
62	Jonathan Bowlan	R-R	6-6	240	12/1/96	KANSAS CITY	0-1	13.50	1	1	0	2.2	6	3	3	
						Omaha (AAA)	12-4	4.67	35	16	0	104.0	106	34	98	
50	Kris Bubic	L-L	6-3	225	8/19/97	KANSAS CITY	1-1	2.67	27	0	1	30.1	26	5	39	
						Omaha (AAA)	1-1	2.63	9	5	0	27.1	23	10	29	
						NW Arkansas (AA)	0-1	9.00	2	2	0	5.0	6	1	5	
						ACL Royals (R)	0-1	2.70	3	3	0	3.1	4	2	8	
	Noah Cameron	L-L	6-3	220	7/17/99	Omaha (AAA)	3-2	2.32	9	9	0	54.1	44	11	62	
						NW Arkansas (AA)	4-4	3.63	16	16	0	74.1	76	25	87	
	Eric Cerantola	R-R	6-5	225	5/2/00	Omaha (AAA)	1-1	3.77	13	0	0	14.1	13	8	20	
						NW Arkansas (AA)	2-3	2.78	24	7	1	58.1	35	42	81	
64	Steven Cruz	R-R	6-7	225	6/15/99	KANSAS CITY	0-0	0.00	5	0	0	5.2	1	0	4	
						Omaha (AAA)	6-1	3.33	47	0	3	51.1	43	24	56	
60	Lucas Erceg	L-R	6-2	214	5/1/95	KANSAS CITY	0-3	2.88	23	0	11	25.0	18	3	31	
						OAKLAND	2-3	3.68	38	0	3	36.2	31	13	41	
56	Hunter Harvey	R-R	6-3	233	12/9/94	KANSAS CITY	0-0	6.35	6	0	1	5.2	8	4	5	
						WASHINGTON	2-4	4.20	43	0	0	45.0	43	12	50	
43	Carlos Hernández	R-R	6-4	255	3/11/97	KANSAS CITY	0-1	3.30	27	0	0	30.0	24	16	27	
						Omaha (AAA)	3-0	5.40	25	0	5	26.2	22	12	36	
73	Sam Long	L-L	6-1	185	7/8/95	KANSAS CITY	3-3	3.16	43	0	1	42.2	34	17	44	
						Omaha (AAA)	1-2	1.31	16	0	2	20.2	17	5	23	
24	Michael Lorenzen	R-R	6-3	217	1/4/92	KANSAS CITY	2-0	1.57	7	6	0	28.2	19	12	22	
						Omaha (AAA)	0-0	2.70	1	1	0	3.1	2	2	4	
						NW Arkansas (AA)	0-0	16.20	1	1	0	1.2	5	1	2	
						TEXAS	5-6	3.81	19	18	0	101.2	82	48	75	
						Round Rock (AAA)	0-0	6.35	3	3	0	11.1	12	9	13	
67	Seth Lugo	R-R	6-4	225	11/17/89	KANSAS CITY	16-9	3.00	33	33	0	206.2	177	48	181	
41	Daniel Lynch IV	L-L	6-6	200	11/17/96	KANSAS CITY	2-0	3.32	16	3	1	43.1	29	14	39	
						Omaha (AAA)	8-1	3.54	21	21	0	119.1	117	32	95	
48	Alec Marsh	R-R	6-2	220	5/14/98	KANSAS CITY	9-9	4.53	26	25	0	129.0	123	39	123	
						Omaha (AAA)	1-1	1.42	5	5	0	19.0	8	6	25	
66	James McArthur	R-R	6-7	230	12/11/96	KANSAS CITY	5-7	4.92	57	0	18	56.2	68	14	49	
55	Cole Ragans	L-L	6-4	190	12/12/97	KANSAS CITY	11-9	3.14	32	32	0	186.1	146	67	223	
46	John Schreiber	R-R	6-2	224	3/05/94	KANSAS CITY	4-3	3.66	59	0	2	51.2	48	20	46	
						NW Arkansas (AA)	0-0	13.50	2	1	0	2.0	4	0	3	
	Evan Sisk	L-L	6-2	209	4/23/97	Omaha (AAA)	6-2	1.57	58	0	15	57.1	33	26	81	
35	Chris Stratton	R-R	6-2	205	8/22/90	KANSAS CITY	4-3	5.55	57	0	4	58.1	53	33	44	
52	Michael Wacha	R-R	6-6	215	7/1/91	KANSAS CITY	13-8	3.35	29	29	0	166.2	154	45	145	
						ACL Royals (R)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	4.0	2	0	6	
30	Kyle Wright	R-R	6-4	215	10/2/95	INJURED — Missed Season										
61	Angel Zerpa	L-L	6-0	220	9/27/99	KANSAS CITY	2-0	3.86	60	0	0	53.2	59	19	49	
						Omaha (AAA)	1-0	0.79	8	0	0	11.1	9	2	9	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
34	Freddy Fermin	R-R	5-9	200	5/16/95	KANSAS CITY	.271	111	339	40	92	6	36	23	66	2
13	Salvador Perez	R-R	6-3	255	5/10/90	KANSAS CITY	.271	158	590	58	160	27	104	44	129	0
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
11	Maikel Garcia	R-R	6-0	180	3/3/00	KANSAS CITY	.231	157	575	84	133	7	58	42	103	37
6	Jonathan India	R-R	6-0	200	12/15/96	CINCINNATI	.248	151	533	84	132	15	58	80	125	13
12	Nick Loftin	R-R	6-0	180	9/25/98	KANSAS CITY	.189	57	148	15	28	1	14	19	24	1
						Omaha (AAA)	.302	58	212	34	64	7	35	37	37	4
19	Michael Massey	L-R	6-0	195	3/22/98	KANSAS CITY	.259	100	332	45	86	14	45	15	56	1
						Omaha (AAA)	.333	12	51	11	17	2	10	3	7	1
						NW Arkansas (AA)	.000	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
9	Vinnie Pasquantino	L-L	6-4	245	10/10/97	KANSAS CITY	.262	131	496	64	130	19	97	40	71	1
32	Nick Pratto	L-L	6-1	225	10/6/98	Omaha (AAA)	.242	115	429	70	104	16	61	53	149	15
7	Bobby Witt Jr.	R-R	6-1	200	6/14/00	KANSAS CITY	.332	161	636	125	211	32	109	57	106	31
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
44	Dairon Blanco	R-R	5-11	200	4/26/93	KANSAS CITY	.258	88	120	37	31	4	13	8	32	31
27	Tyler Gentry	R-R	6-1	210	2/1/99	KANSAS CITY	.000	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
						Omaha (AAA)	.251	121	431	68	108	16	59	53	149	8
28	Kyle Isbel	L-R	5-11	190	3/3/97	KANSAS CITY	.229	136	384	62	88	8	42	27	88	11
1	MJ Melendez	L-R	6-1	190	11/29/98	KANSAS CITY	.206	135	412	44	85	17	44	35	113	4
						NW Arkansas (AA)	.111	3	9	3	1	1	2	1	2	0
16	Hunter Renfroe	R-R	6-1	230	1/28/92	KANSAS CITY	.229	120	385	44	88	15	52	36	84	1
						NW Arkansas (AA)	.000	1	4	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
17	Nelson Velázquez	R-R	6-0	190	12/26/98	KANSAS CITY	.200	64	205	31	41	8	27	19	61	2
						Omaha (AAA)	.239	56	188	22	45	7	33	34	47	6
8	Drew Waters	S-R	6-1	185	12/30/98	KANSAS CITY	.188	7	16	2	3	0	1	2	6	0
						Omaha (AAA)	.290	109	393	84	114	13	61	53	121	20
22	Joey Wiemer	R-R	6-4	226	2/11/99	MILWAUKEE	.154	19	26	2	4	0	0	1	9	1
						Nashville (AAA)	.242	53	190	29	46	3	21	43	61	6
						CINCINNATI	.000	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
						Louisville (AAA)	.190	30	105	12	20	0	3	12	37	4



Minnesota TWINS

2025 PREDICTION

3RD

AL CENTRAL

2024 FINISH: 4TH (82-80)

Halfway through a game in Texas on Aug. 18, the Twins looked like lead-pipe locks for the American League playoffs. They were 17 games clear of .500 already, with a chance to push for 95 wins and a division title with a strong finish. They led late in the game and turned the ball over to one of their key middle relievers, Jorge Alcala — who rapidly blew a four-run advantage, resulting in a loss that became emblematic of the collapse it presaged.

The Twins entered the offseason desperate to shake off the bad vibes resulting from their 12-27 stumble to the finish line but shackled by the prohibitive payroll constraints imposed by an ownership group readying itself to sell the club. The only really good news: The team has abundant talent and should have made the playoffs easily last year. They could recover and surge forward in 2025, even without a true overhaul.

ROTATION

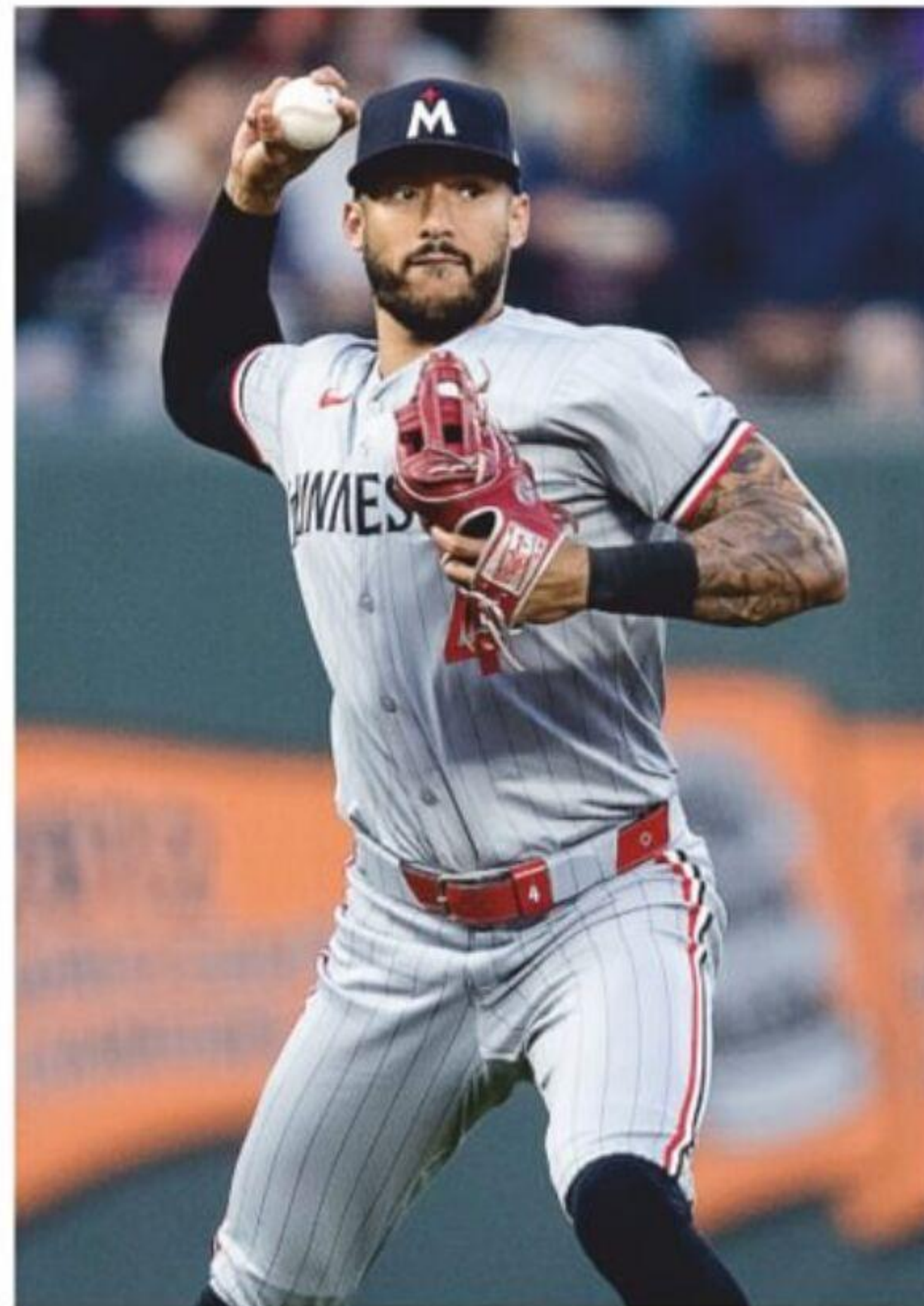
Perhaps the strongest unit on a fairly balanced roster, the Twins' rotation features imported ace Pablo López, who can chew up innings and rack up strikeouts when his changeup and sweeper are both hitting their spots. He did run into a bit of a first-inning problem in 2024, giving up too many runs before settling in, but he's a true frontline starter. Slightly less proven are aces-in-waiting Joe Ryan (injuries) and Bailey Ober (consistency and homer vulnerability), each of whom nonetheless makes plenty of teams jealous as a mid-rotation option. This whole group is young, but it's youngest at the back end, where Simeon Woods Richardson enjoyed a modest breakout rookie campaign in 2024, and tall, hard-throwing David Festa threatens a breakout as well. Zebby Matthews completes a six-man rotation.

BULLPEN

The team is leaving open the possibility of converting one star reliever — late-blooming four-pitch monster Griffin Jax — back to the rotation, but on balance, the need is likely greater in relief. Jax emerged as one of the best relievers in baseball in 2024, with a bullying fastball and a deluxe bat-missing sweeper. That made up for slight regression from fellow flamethrower Jhoan Durán, whose fastball sat 99 and touched 102 instead of sitting 101 and touching 105. Durán remains the most likely closer, despite a minor misstep on the road to true stardom in that role. Beyond that duo lies a large number of exciting but not truly reliable options, like Alcalá, the oft-injured Brock Stewart and the always-improving Cole Sands, who took a big step forward in 2024.

MIDDLE INFIELD

In a season meant to redeem him after a 2023 campaign in which he was marginalized by plantar fasciitis, Carlos Correa had one of the best half-seasons of a borderline Cooperstown-caliber career. Then, he landed on the injured list at the All-Star break and didn't make it back until late September. The former No. 1 overall pick is still the unquestioned starting shortstop and a dynamic presence on the field, but only when he can manage to be there. Meanwhile,



Carlos Correa

Target Field

Opened: 2010 • Capacity: 38,544
Left: 339' Center: 411' Right: 328'
Tickets: 800-338-9467
mlb.com/TWINS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Highest single-season whiff rate on fastballs, 2023-24

1. 2023 Twins	24.3
2. 2023 Mariners	24.0
3. 2024 Twins	23.1
4. 2023 Rays	22.8
5. 2024 Mariners	22.7

on the other side of the keystone, chaos reigns. The most likely and best option is Brooks Lee, one of the top prospects in the game before his promotion in July, but he has to show doubters that his false start of a rookie season was just a blip.

CORNERS

After getting unexpectedly excellent returns on a one-year investment in superannuated Carlos Santana, the Twins watched him sign a much more lucrative version of the same deal with their archrivals, the Cleveland Guardians. Their plans to replace him at first base could be as simple as a straight platoon, with the remarkably patient Edouard Julien facing righties and the streaky but intriguing Jose Miranda facing lefties. On the other side of the diamond, the answer (unless and until

he makes a permanent move elsewhere, as the team has tried him at second base and in the outfield) is Royce Lewis. When in the lineup, Lewis is one of the game's most ferocious power hitters, but that qualifying clause has carried an unhappily heavy weight throughout his young big-league career.

OUTFIELD

After a few hiccups and a reset in the minors or two, Trevor Larnach and Matt Wallner appear to have locked down the corner outfield spots. Though he played through an injury down the stretch, Larnach was perhaps the Twin least

susceptible to the collective six-week slide that ended Minnesota's season; he slashed .303/.389/.465 during those final 39 games. Wallner, meanwhile, has blossomed into a fearsome slugger. He had six of the Twins' seven hardest-hit balls in 2024 in only 261 plate appearances. He could hit 40 home runs in a full season. Byron Buxton will set up camp between Larnach and Wallner in 2025 after making minor but significant progress in his never-ending battle to stay healthy. His legs have slowed just enough to make him merely solid in center field instead of spectacular, but he remains a two-way asset.

CATCHING

With a timeshare approach, Minnesota has kept both Ryan Jeffers and Christian Vázquez healthy and fresh for the last two seasons. It hasn't paid off in stellar production, but the stability and defensive value of the pair have made them a worthwhile tandem. With tight payroll constraints in place and big contracts locked up elsewhere on the roster, though, it seems unlikely that the front office



Byron Buxton

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

DH Willi Castro (S)
SS Carlos Correa (R)
LF Trevor Larnach (L)
3B Royce Lewis (R)
RF Matt Wallner (L)
CF Byron Buxton (R)
1B Edouard Julien (L)
2B Brooks Lee (S)
C Ryan Jeffers (R)

■ BENCH

C Christian Vázquez (R)
UTIL Austin Martin (R)
UTIL Michael Helman (R)
INF José Miranda (R)

■ ROTATION

RHP Pablo López
RHP Joe Ryan
RHP Bailey Ober
RHP Simeon Woods Richardson
RHP David Festa
RHP Zebby Matthews

■ BULLPEN

RHP Jhoan Duran (C)
RHP Griffin Jax
RHP Cole Sands
RHP Brock Stewart
RHP Jorge Alcala
RHP Eiberson Castellano
LHP Kody Funderburk

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE TWINS "They're kind of like Seattle Lite for me — they have plenty of pitching, and they throw a lot of strikes, so they'll stay in every game. But it's really the same story here because their best hitters just never stay healthy. Carlos Correa, Byron Buxton and Royce Lewis could be the nucleus of a runaway division winner, but something always goes wrong physically. Willi Castro should get more credit; he's a very important guy for them, and Trevor Larnach and Matt Wallner are solid. They have a lot of guys with good-but-not-great power, so they're dangerous, but they don't really scare you. Pablo López has stretches where he's dominant at the top of that rotation, and Bailey Ober came into his own last year. But they need Chris Paddack to be the guy he was five years ago, and that's asking a lot. The bullpen doesn't really light you up, either. But they all fill up the zone, so you know you're gonna make your dinner reservation after the game."

will want to allocate roughly \$15 million to a position short on upside. A shake-up is coming to what had been the least changeable spot in the lineup.

DH/BENCH

Switch-hitting utility man Willi Castro is the linchpin of much of the team’s attack. He rotates through most of the positions on the diamond, providing a slashing style of offense and playable defense everywhere, including patching holes created by injuries. Since trading Nelson Cruz at the July deadline in 2021, the Twins have steered clear of using a full-time DH. Instead, they like to rotate players through that role. Julien and Miranda figure to get chunks of time there, but so do veterans the team wants to shield from injury, like Buxton and Correa, and strong hitters with dubious but important defensive skills, like Lewis and Wallner.

MANAGEMENT

The Pohlad family resisted the temptation to clean house after a deeply frustrating final quarter of the season. Instead, Derek Falvey will return as the chief baseball decision-maker for a ninth season, but some changes did reshape the front office. Ditto for the dugout, where Falvey retained Rocco Baldelli for his sixth season but sent a quartet of coaches packing. Falvey and Baldelli have built the Twins into a team with a strong farm system and perennial expectations of contention, but they face the challenge of becoming more athletic and less one-dimensional — a task made tougher by a lack of spending power.

FINAL ANALYSIS

When the Twins won the AL Central in 2023 and snapped a playoff losing streak of nearly two decades, they seemed to have found a lane through which to pursue a miniature dynasty in the league’s least imposing division. Just one season later, the Guardians have reclaimed primacy in the division, and the Tigers and Royals have emerged as medium-term threats. The Twins can claim the league’s fastest throwers and some of the hardest hitters but also the slowest runners and some of the worst defenders. Their viability in 2025 depends on changing some of that for the better without giving away the strengths they’ve systematically implemented over the last almost-decade.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

TROUBLE IN PARADISE? At the end of the season, amid the team’s unraveling and the sense of wasted opportunity, some tensions surfaced between veterans (notably, Carlos Correa) and younger players (notably, Royce Lewis). Though no loud arguments were heard or harsh words hurled in public, Correa and other veterans spoke of a need for some teammates to put in more thoughtful prep work. Lewis appeared to take that somewhat personally, in remarks to the press.

A NEW DIRECTION Not long after the end of the season, the Pohlads announced their intention to sell the Twins, after 40 years of family ownership. For many Minnesota fans, it was welcome news, as the family’s spending on the team has been uneven and unpredictable over the years. In December, megarich brothers Mat and Justin Ishbia emerged as possible buyers. Their combination of wealth and eagerness to please fans of the other sports teams they own (Mat is the owner of the Phoenix Suns) suggest that they would represent a sea change for the franchise.

BREAKING FREE OF BLACKOUTS For the last handful of seasons, hundreds of thousands of Twins fans faced a choice between paying for a premium package with a specific cable provider and being frozen out of watching their favorite team’s games altogether. Now, however, the Twins will be available to any fan willing to pay the monthly or annual subscription fee to stream their games via MLB.tv. It’s a big step forward for accessibility — though it won’t allow the team to pull down as much money as their previous rights deal did.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27 STL	28	29 STL
30 STL	31 CWS	1 CWS	2 CWS	3 HOU	4	5 HOU
6 HOU	7 KC	8 KC	9 KC	10 KC	11 DET	12 DET
13 DET	14 NYM	15 NYM	16 NYM	17	18 ATL	19 ATL
20 ATL	21	22 CWS	23 CWS	24 CWS	25 LAA	26 LAA
27 LAA	28 CLE	29 CLE	30 CLE			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 CLE	2 BOS	3 BOS
4 BOS	5	6 BAL	7 BAL	8 BAL	9 SF	10 SF
11 SF	12	13 BAL	14 BAL	15 BAL	16 MIL	17 MIL
18 MIL	19 CLE	20 CLE	21 CLE	22	23 KC	24 KC
25 KC	26 TB	27 TB	28 TB	29	30 SEA	31 SEA
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 SEA	2 A's	3 A's	4 A's	5 A's	6 TOR	7 TOR
8 TOR	9	10 TEX	11 TEX	12 TEX	13 HOU	14 HOU
15 HOU	16	17 CIN	18 CIN	19 CIN	20 MIL	21 MIL
22 MIL	23 SEA	24 SEA	25 SEA	26 SEA	27 DET	28 DET
29 DET	30					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 MIA	2 MIA	3 MIA	4 TB	5 TB
6 TB	7	8 CHC	9 CHC	10 CHC	11 PIT	12 PIT
13 PIT	14	ALL-STAR BREAK			18 COL	19 COL
20 COL	21 LAD	22 LAD	23 LAD	24	25 WAS	26 WAS
27 WAS	28 BOS	29 BOS	30 BOS	31		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 CLE	2 CLE
3 CLE	4 DET	5 DET	6 DET	7	8 KC	9 KC
10 KC	11 NYY	12 NYY	13 NYY	14 DET	15 DET	16 DET
17 DET	18	19 A's	20 A's	21 A's	22 CWS	23 CWS
24 CWS	25 TOR	26 TOR	27 TOR	28	29 SD	30 SD
31 SD						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 CWS	2 CWS	3 CWS	4 CWS	5 KC	6 KC
7 KC	8 LAA	9 LAA	10 LAA	11	12 ARI	13 ARI
14 ARI	15 NYY	16 NYY	17 NYY	18	19 CLE	20 CLE
21 CLE	22	23 TEX	24 TEX	25 TEX	26 PHI	27 PHI
28 PHI	29	30				

STATISTICIAN

12 Number of hits by Jose Miranda in as many at-bats in early July. Miranda reached base in 13 straight plate appearances, including being hit by a pitch once.

9.0 Percentage of Twins’ plate appearances ending with a hard-hit ball in the air to their pull field, highest in MLB.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



1. Walker Jenkins, OF (20) A fast riser with an advanced feel for hitting.

- 2. Emmanuel Rodriguez, OF (22)** Draws walks as often as some players collect hits.
- 3. Luke Keaschall, UTIL (22)** Has the athleticism to play all over the diamond defensively.
- 4. Andrew Morris, RHP (23)** Morris’ ceiling is in the middle of the rotation, but he’s nearly ready.
- 5. Marco Raya, RHP (22)** Looks like either a five-inning starter or a backend reliever with mouthwatering stuff.
- 6. Kaelen Culpepper, IF (22)** Even fairly advanced pro pitching is manageable for him.
- 7. Kyle DeBarge, IF (21)** The 33rd overall pick in July, thanks to his solid collegiate production.
- 8. Cory Lewis, RHP (24)** Incorporates the knuckleball into a solid, deep arsenal.
- 9. C.J. Culpepper, RHP (23)** Shows signs of being capable of a mid-rotation workload.
- 10. Charlee Soto, RHP (19)** A big, hard-throwing starter with unusual polish for his age.

Twins Roster

Senior Vice President, General Manager: Jeremy Zoll • Manager: Rocco Baldelli • Coaches: Trevor Amicone (asst. hitting), Matt Borgschulte (hitting), Ramon Borrego (first base/infield), Hank Conger (asst. bench), Nate Dammann (quality control), Pete Maki (pitching), Luis Ramirez (asst. pitching/interpreter), Rayden Sierra (hitting), Colby Suggs (bullpen), Jayce Tingler (bench), Tommy Watkins (third base/outfield)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
	Travis Adams	R-R	6-1	197	1/19/00	St. Paul (AAA)	0-2	5.21	4	3	0	19.0	17	7	9	
						Wichita (AA)	5-7	3.67	22	19	0	108.0	95	28	109	
66	Jorge Alcala	R-R	6-3	205	7/28/95	MINNESOTA	4-3	3.24	54	0	0	58.1	40	20	58	
						St. Paul (AAA)	0-0	1.69	9	0	2	10.2	7	7	16	
83	Matt Canterino	R-R	6-2	222	12/14/97	INJURED — Missed Season										
	Eiberson Castellano	R-R	6-3	160	5/9/01	Reading (AA)	2-3	3.79	8	8	0	40.1	31	9	50	
						Jersey Shore (A+)	4-2	4.12	14	12	0	63.1	58	20	86	
59	Jhoan Duran	R-R	6-5	230	1/8/98	MINNESOTA	6-9	3.64	58	0	23	54.1	48	15	66	
						St. Paul (AAA)	0-0	9.00	2	0	0	2.0	4	0	5	
58	David Festa	R-R	6-6	185	3/8/00	MINNESOTA	2-6	4.90	14	13	0	64.1	62	23	77	
						St. Paul (AAA)	3-3	4.03	15	15	0	60.1	56	26	89	
55	Kody Funderburk	L-L	6-4	230	11/27/96	MINNESOTA	1-0	6.49	27	0	1	34.2	41	15	32	
						St. Paul (AAA)	1-0	6.08	11	0	3	13.1	12	6	22	
53	Brent Headrick	L-L	6-6	235	12/17/97	MINNESOTA	0-0	3.00	1	0	0	3.0	2	2	5	
						St. Paul (AAA)	1-0	2.00	6	4	0	18.0	14	6	23	
						Fort Myers (A)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	1.1	2	1	0	
31	Ronny Henriquez	R-R	5-10	155	6/20/00	MINNESOTA	1-1	3.26	16	1	0	19.1	20	5	15	
						St. Paul (AAA)	1-2	3.44	34	3	3	55.0	59	17	59	
22	Griffin Jax	R-R	6-2	195	11/22/94	MINNESOTA	5-5	2.03	72	0	10	71.0	47	15	95	
49	Pablo López	L-R	6-4	225	3/7/96	MINNESOTA	15-10	4.08	32	32	0	185.1	180	41	198	
52	Zebby Matthews	R-R	6-5	225	5/22/00	MINNESOTA	1-4	6.69	9	9	0	37.2	51	11	43	
						St. Paul (AAA)	1-2	5.68	4	4	0	19.0	24	1	23	
						Wichita (AA)	2-1	1.95	10	9	0	55.1	36	6	63	
						Cedar Rapids (A+)	3-0	1.59	4	4	0	22.2	17	0	28	
17	Bailey Ober	R-R	6-9	260	7/12/95	MINNESOTA	12-9	3.98	31	31	0	178.2	136	43	191	
20	Chris Paddack	R-R	6-5	217	1/8/96	MINNESOTA	5-3	4.99	17	17	0	88.1	102	21	79	
	Marco Raya	R-R	6-1	170	8/7/02	St. Paul (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	5.0	5	0	4	
						Wichita (AA)	3-4	4.27	24	24	0	92.2	84	44	99	
41	Joe Ryan	R-R	6-2	205	6/5/96	MINNESOTA	7-7	3.60	23	23	0	135.0	110	23	147	
44	Cole Sands	R-R	6-3	215	7/17/97	MINNESOTA	9-1	3.28	62	0	4	71.1	59	12	85	
61	Brock Stewart	L-R	6-3	220	10/3/91	MINNESOTA	0-0	5.17	16	0	0	15.2	15	8	20	
						St. Paul (AAA)	0-0	2.25	4	0	0	4.0	2	2	8	
39	Michael Tonkin	R-R	6-7	220	11/19/89	MINNESOTA	0-0	3.86	13	0	0	16.1	18	7	22	
						NEW YORK AL	3-2	3.38	39	0	2	56.0	44	21	57	
						NEW YORK NL	1-2	5.14	5	0	0	7.0	8	2	6	
48	Justin Topa	R-R	6-4	200	3/7/91	MINNESOTA	0-0	0.00	3	0	0	2.1	1	0	2	
						St. Paul (AAA)	0-0	4.09	11	0	0	11.0	9	4	16	
						Fort Myers (A)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	1	1	
37	Louie Varland	L-R	6-1	205	12/9/97	MINNESOTA	0-6	7.61	16	7	0	49.2	68	16	49	
						St. Paul (AAA)	5-8	4.75	17	16	0	83.1	84	32	96	
78	Simeon Woods Richardson	R-R	6-3	210	9/27/00	MINNESOTA	5-5	4.17	28	28	0	133.2	125	48	117	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
85	Jair Camargo	R-R	5-10	230	7/1/99	MINNESOTA	.000	5	6	1	0	0	0	1	3	0
						St. Paul (AAA)	.212	74	283	36	60	12	51	25	94	2
						Fort Myers (A)	.304	6	23	2	7	1	4	2	7	1
						FCL Twins (R)	.667	1	3	1	2	0	1	1	1	0
27	Ryan Jeffers	R-R	6-4	235	6/3/97	MINNESOTA	.226	122	412	56	93	21	64	32	94	3
8	Christian Vázquez	R-R	5-9	205	8/21/90	MINNESOTA	.221	93	294	29	65	7	27	11	65	3
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
50	Willi Castro	S-R	6-1	206	4/24/97	MINNESOTA	.247	158	558	89	138	12	60	51	150	14
4	Carlos Correa	R-R	6-4	220	9/22/94	MINNESOTA	.310	86	319	55	99	14	54	40	61	0
	Mickey Gasper	S-R	5-10	205	10/11/95	BOSTON	.000	13	18	1	0	0	0	4	8	0
						Worcester (AAA)	.367	48	169	38	62	8	36	30	20	1
						Portland (AA)	.282	44	142	28	40	4	22	26	22	3
47	Edouard Julien	L-R	6-0	195	4/30/99	MINNESOTA	.199	94	266	36	53	8	21	33	102	6
						St. Paul (AAA)	.242	49	186	33	45	7	20	46	73	6
72	Brooks Lee	S-R	6-1	205	2/14/01	MINNESOTA	.221	50	172	9	38	3	27	11	27	3
						St. Paul (AAA)	.308	25	104	22	32	8	25	10	16	1
						Fort Myers (A)	.333	5	18	2	6	0	3	3	3	1
						FCL Twins (R)	.450	5	20	5	9	0	2	1	2	0
23	Royce Lewis	R-R	6-2	200	6/5/99	MINNESOTA	.233	82	292	40	68	16	47	28	74	0
						St. Paul (AAA)	.172	8	29	4	5	0	0	2	11	1
64	Jose Miranda	R-R	6-2	210	6/29/98	MINNESOTA	.284	121	401	44	114	9	49	18	66	2
						St. Paul (AAA)	.294	9	34	5	10	1	4	5	5	1
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
25	Byron Buxton	R-R	6-2	190	12/18/93	MINNESOTA	.279	102	355	62	99	18	56	20	99	7
						St. Paul (AAA)	.091	4	11	1	1	0	1	1	6	0
92	Michael Helman	R-R	6-0	195	5/23/96	MINNESOTA	.300	9	10	2	3	0	0	0	3	0
						St. Paul (AAA)	.271	72	277	49	75	14	47	29	76	12
89	DaShawn Keirsej Jr.	L-L	6-1	195	5/13/97	MINNESOTA	.154	6	13	1	2	1	1	0	1	0
						St. Paul (AAA)	.300	111	443	71	133	14	81	48	116	36
9	Trevor Larnach	L-R	6-4	223	2/26/97	MINNESOTA	.259	112	355	59	92	15	52	40	89	4
						Fort Myers (A)	.182	3	11	2	2	0	3	2	2	0
82	Austin Martin	R-R	5-11	185	3/23/99	MINNESOTA	.253	93	233	41	59	1	16	20	47	7
						St. Paul (AAA)	.305	28	95	19	29	1	10	28	15	8
87	Emmanuel Rodriguez	L-L	5-11	210	2/28/03	St. Paul (AAA)	.217	7	23	6	5	1	5	7	12	0
						Wichita (AA)	.298	37	124	40	37	8	20	42	46	9
						Fort Myers (A)	.000	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
						FCL Twins (R)	.286	2	7	1	2	0	2	1	3	0
38	Matt Wallner	L-R	6-4	220	12/12/97	MINNESOTA	.259	75	220	26	57	13	37	24	95	3
						St. Paul (AAA)	.259	67	259	45	67	19	53	32	91	5

A's ATHLETICS

2025 PREDICTION
4TH
AL WEST
2024 FINISH: 4TH (69-93)

It's a brand new world for the Athletics. They are no longer in Oakland, and they are three years (at least) away from being the Las Vegas A's. They're simply the Athletics, sharing a minor league stadium in Sacramento.

Six years removed from their last postseason appearance, the A's may be ready to move up in a weakened AL West. For once, they spent more money by setting a club record on a three-year, \$67 million deal to sign righthander Luis Severino. They then traded for lefthander Jeffery Springs to bulk up a starting rotation that had a 4.76 ERA, 14th in the AL. The Athletics also hope to have filled their opening at third base with the signing of Gio Urshela. To start 2025, they struck a deal with DH/outfielder Brent Rooker on a five-year extension worth \$60 million.

In a way once unimaginable for a tight-wallet franchise, they were motivated to spend. The A's are getting MLB revenue sharing in 2025, but to keep getting it, they have to commit to a payroll 1.5 times the money they're due from revenue sharing. The A's estimated payroll for luxury tax purposes in 2025 is \$96.8 million (FanGraphs) after the additions and the Rooker signing. The A's are expected to get \$70 million in revenue sharing, meaning they entered the winter needing to add in excess of \$40 million by Opening Day. Should they fail to get there, the MLBPA could file a grievance. So between now and the start of the season, don't be surprised if the A's make another big payout. Or two.



Mason Miller

ROTATION

The club has newfound strength with the additions of Severino, coming off his first healthy year since 2018, and the newly healthy Springs, who was 9-5 with a 2.46 ERA in his last healthy season (2022). With holdover lefty JP Sears, who has started 64 games the past two seasons, the club has a competent 1-2-3 rotation punch. First up behind the "S Squad" of Severino, Springs and Sears are Joey Estes and Mitch Spence, both with 24 starts last season. J.T. Ginn, coming off a six-start (4.24 ERA) debut in 2024, could be next up, but also in the competition are lefty Hogan Harris (21 games, nine starts, 2.86 ERA) and Osvaldo Bido (16 games, nine starts, 3.41). At the winter meetings, manager Mark Kot-say talked up Jason Alexander and Jack Perkins as spring candidates, too.

BULLPEN

One of the A's greatest strengths is the pen, where Mason Miller had a breakout season, finishing fourth in Rookie of the Year voting with a 2.49 ERA, 28 saves and 14.4 strikeouts per nine innings. Tyler Ferguson (4-2, 3.68) is back, as is Michel Otañez (1-0, 3.44). Lefty T.J. McFarland, a free agent who led the AL with 79 appearances, is back. This season will present an opportunity for Grant Holman and Brady Basso to step up after brief showings in 2024, and Noah Murdock, the fourth man taken in the Rule 5 draft, gets his big chance.

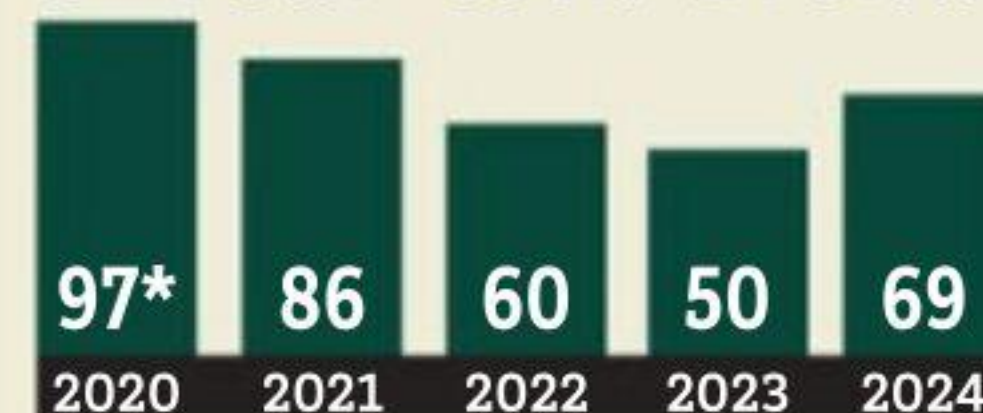
MIDDLE INFIELD

There is a new look here in shortstop Jacob Wilson. The idea was for the club's No. 1 draft pick in 2023 to play the second half of the season at short, but after

Sutter Health Park

Opened: 2000 • Capacity: 14,014
Left: 330' Center: 403' Right: 325'
Tickets: 916-371-HITS (4487)
mlb.com.ATHLETICS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Most single-season batters hit,
2023-24

1. 2023 Athletics	100
2. 2024 Mets	94
3. 2024 Reds	93
4. 2024 Athletics	92
5. 2023 White Sox	91

he made his major-league debut on July 19, the club's No. 1 prospect lasted just one at-bat before going on the IL with a left hamstring strain, out for six weeks. The 22-year-old returns as the regular shortstop. With Zack Gelof back, second base is set, but the length of his residence there will depend on his output. He had 2.6 WAR as a rookie in 2023, but that fell to 1.4 in 2024 in a season of struggles in which he hit .211 and led the AL with 188 strikeouts.

CORNERS

Urshela, a good defender with some offensive ability, is in, meaning that Max Schuemann, last year's primary shortstop, and Darell Hernaiz are battling for backup roles entering spring training with Brett Harris and No. 8 prospect Max Muncy

PROJECTED LINEUP

LINEUP

RF	Lawrence Butler (L)
DH	Brent Rooker (R)
CF	JJ Bleday (L)
C	Shea Langeliers (R)
1B	Tyler Soderstrom (L)
2B	Zack Gelof (R)
LF	Seth Brown (L)
3B	Gio Urshela (R)
SS	Jacob Wilson (R)

BENCH

C	Kyle McCann (L)
INF/OF	Max Schuemann (R)
OF	Miguel Andujar (R)
OF	Esteury Ruiz (R)

ROTATION

RHP	Luis Severino
LHP	Jeffrey Springs
LHP	JP Sears
RHP	Joey Estes
RHP	Mitch Spence

BULLPEN

RHP	Mason Miller (C)
RHP	Tyler Ferguson
RHP	Michel Otañez
LHP	T.J. McFarland
RHP	Grant Holman
RHP	Hogan Harris
RHP	Noah Murdock
RHP	Brady Basso

(not that one) getting a look, too. Seth Brown gets some playing time at first when he's not in the outfield. But the plan going into the season is that 2020 first-round pick Tyler Soderstrom makes the full conversion from catching to first base, the position he started for the A's in 12 of their final 14 2024 games. The A's see him as having Shea Langeliers-level power, at least.

OUTFIELD

The A's have some real potential for breakout seasons from the outfield, with right fielder Lawrence Butler, center fielder JJ Bleday and a Brown/Miguel Andujar platoon in left. The wrinkle that could change everything would be a return to form by center fielder Esteury Ruiz.

He stole an AL-best 67 bases with the A's in 2023 but

spent most of 2024 in the minors after hitting .200 with five steals in just 29 games. Butler made changes to his swing mid-2024 and went from hitting .211 with nine homers in 64 games before the All-Star break to .300 with 13 homers in 61 games after. Bleday broke out in his age-26 season, hitting 20 homers with 60 RBIs. Nine of his homers came after the All-Star break, during which time he hit .263. Brown's 25-homer form of 2022 was long gone when he was sent down in mid-June with a .189 average and just five homers. But after a July recall, he hit .271 in 61 games down the stretch with nine homers.

CATCHING

While the A's have populated other rosters in recent years with catchers — Sean Murphy in Atlanta, Jonah Heim in Texas — and have moved Soderstrom to first base from behind the plate, they nonetheless have a guy they really like with power and good defensive skills in Langeliers. He will bat in the middle of the



Brent Rooker

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE A's "I could see them coming in second or third in the division if it all falls into place. They don't have the depth to withstand many injuries, but I think their main 26-man roster is gonna be very formidable. They'll give teams fits. Mark Kotsay is a great communicator, and he's young enough to really impact that roster. I really like what they did with the rotation, adding Luis Severino and Jeffrey Springs to JP Sears, who challenges guys inside and has no fear. And Mason Miller is probably the best closer in the division, so they're gonna win the games they're supposed to win. They've got three legit hitters in their prime in Brent Rooker, Lawrence Butler and JJ Bleday, and I think Zack Gelof will rebound; he was so good as a rookie but struggled last year. The Sacramento move could really galvanize and energize this group — at worst, they're gonna be spoilers."

lineup and could hit cleanup. Langeliers, a Silver Slugger nominee, doesn't like to sit; he played in 137 games last year, with 123 of those starts coming behind the plate.

DH/BENCH

That the offense will be built around Rooker is something of a surprise because there were expectations that the A's would deal Rooker rather than pay him in his first year of salary arbitration. Instead, GM David Forst did an un-A's-like thing with the contract extension for Rooker, who, among other things, has developed into a clubhouse leader. As much as the A's like Langeliers, the club is looking for some starts for catcher Kyle McCann, who hit .236 as a rookie last year. Schuemann, the regular at short last year, seems likely to back up, although he could push Urshela at third base. The A's could use more pop in their bench outfield candidates, so Colby Thomas with his 31 minor league homers in 2024 has a golden opportunity, as does Denzel Clarke.

MANAGEMENT

Kotsay finished in a tie for fifth in AL Manager of the Year voting last year. For a man whose club won just 69 games, that says something about the level of respect he gets for having one of the most difficult jobs in the sport. He has the temperament to deal with a young team making mistakes while having to play under the specter of the franchise moving. With all of that, his team improved by 19 games from 2023 to 2024. This has been a tough offseason for Forst, who has a mandate to spend some money for once while having to convince players to come and play in a 14,000-seat stadium for at least the next three years.

FINAL ANALYSIS

In all, the A's 2025 season seems as unpredictable as any on record, what with the move, playing in a minor league stadium, the increased payroll and competing in the AL West, a division that has produced two of the last three World Series winners but a division with some serious weaknesses. A team that finished 12th in the AL in runs scored and 13th in ERA has a steep climb ahead, but adding to the rotation and holding on to the bulk of its offense and bullpen has this team thinking that a winning record isn't out of the question.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

A FRIENDLY FACE Rule 5 draftee Noah Murdock's great calling card is a 98 mph fastball. But while he's never pitched above Triple-A (10 games), he has an idea when it comes to knowing what is expected from him at the MLB level, having been second baseman Zack Gelof's teammate at the University of Virginia.

CLOSING THOUGHTS Mason Miller's rookie season not only saw him save 28 games, but his 90 percent save rate was also fourth-best in the AL for relievers owning double-digit saves. He also averaged 14.4 K's per nine innings, the best of any MLB pitcher with more than 40 games.

SECOND-HALF SURGE If a strong second half of 2024 (39-37 after going 30-56 through June) is an omen, the A's are in position to emulate the kind of season the Royals had in 2024 when KC improved by 30 games after their winning percentage improved by 137 points in the second half.

COOPERSTOWN BOUND While his A's players said they would be keeping their last "Oakland" jerseys, not so much for manager Mark Kotsay. He was asked to donate his final game jersey to the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, and responded by saying, "I'm really honored to be asked to do that."

NIGHT-NIGHT During their time in Oakland, the A's routinely played as many or more day games as any MLB team. With the move to Sacramento and its heat, that changes. The Athletics will play 60 night games at Sutter Health Park. That will tie a franchise record for a single season.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27	28	29
				SEA	SEA	SEA
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
SEA	CHC	CHC	CHC		COL	COL
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
COL	SD	SD	SD		NYM	NYM
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
NYM		CWS	CWS	CWS	MIL	MIL
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
MIL		TEX	TEX	TEX	CWS	CWS
27	28	29	30			
CWS	TEX	TEX	TEX			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
				TEX	MIA	MIA
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MIA	SEA	SEA	SEA		NYN	NYN
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
NYN		LAD	LAD	LAD	SF	SF
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
SF	LAA	LAA	LAA	LAA	PHI	PHI
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
PHI		HOU	HOU	TOR	TOR	TOR
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
TOR	MIN	MIN	MIN	MIN	BAL	BAL
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
BAL	LAA	LAA	LAA		KC	KC
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
KC	HOU	HOU	HOU	HOU	CLE	CLE
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
CLE		DET	DET	DET	NYN	NYN
29	30					
NYN	TB					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		TB	TB		SF	SF
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
SF		ATL	ATL	ATL	TOR	TOR
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
TOR		ALL-STAR BREAK			CLE	CLE
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
CLE	TEX	TEX	TEX	HOU	HOU	HOU
27	28	29	30	31		
HOU	SEA	SEA	SEA			
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
					ARI	ARI
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
ARI		WAS	WAS	WAS	BAL	BAL
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
BAL	TB	TB	TB		LAA	LAA
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
LAA		MIN	MIN	MIN	SEA	SEA
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
SEA	DET	DET	DET		TEX	TEX
31						
TEX						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	STL	STL			LAA	LAA
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
LAA	BOS	BOS	BOS		CIN	CIN
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
CIN		BOS	BOS	BOS	PIT	PIT
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
PIT		HOU	HOU	HOU	KC	KC
28	29	30				
KC						

STATISTICIAN

19 The improvement in wins from 2023 to 2024 (50 to 69). That was the fifth-largest season-to-season increase in A's history.

1,502 The A's got there even while striking out 37 times in the final three games of the season, just enough to set a new club record for strikeouts in a season, six more than the 1,496 of 2023.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Jacob Wilson, SS (22)** He hit when healthy — .433 over three minor-league levels.

■ **2. Nick Kurtz, RHP (21)** The 2024 first-round pick posted a .368 season split between Single-A and Double-A.

■ **3. Luis Morales, RHP (22)** Hard thrower has added 10 pounds in an effort to reach his peak.

■ **4. Tommy White, 3B (22)** A's went over slot and signed him for \$3 million in 2024.

■ **5. Henry Bolte, OF (21)** In addition to his power, he has near-elite speed (46 SB in 2024).

■ **6. Mason Barnett, RHP (24)** Acquired at the deadline; went 4-2, 2.61 at Double-A Midland.

■ **7. Colby Thomas, OF (23)** Has speed (15 SB) and a strong arm.

■ **8. Max Muncy, SS (22)** He hit .277 with eight HR at Triple-A after changing to a shorter swing.

■ **9. Gage Jump, LHP (21)** A's Competitive Balance B pick after a 6-2, 3.47 year starting for LSU.

■ **10. Denzel Clarke, OF (24)** Has a strong arm, plus speed and power to all fields.

Athletics Roster

General Manager: David Forst • Manager: Mark Kotsay • Coaches: Mike Aldrete (hitting), Darren Bush (bench and director of hitting), Chris Cron (hitting), Bobby Crosby (first base), Josh Cuffe (head sport performance), Scott Emerson (pitching), Ramon Hernandez (major league and interpreter), Dan Hubbs (bullpen), Marcus Jensen (quality control), Eric Martins (third base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
66	Brady Basso	R-L	6-2	213	10/8/97	OAKLAND	1-1	4.03	7	4	0	22.1	23	5	19	
						Las Vegas (AAA)	4-3	5.19	16	12	2	67.2	69	22	77	
						Midland (AA)	1-1	2.84	6	6	0	25.1	22	3	32	
45	Osvaldo Bido	R-R	6-3	175	10/18/95	OAKLAND	5-3	3.41	16	9	0	63.1	43	26	63	
						Las Vegas (AAA)	4-3	4.50	10	9	0	48.0	48	16	55	
	Ryan Cusick	R-R	6-6	235	11/12/99	Las Vegas (AAA)	0-1	10.38	2	0	0	4.1	8	4	2	
						Midland (AA)	3-3	4.47	27	8	4	56.1	49	33	63	
						ACL Athletics (R)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	3.0	1	3	1	
68	Joey Estes	R-R	6-2	190	10/8/01	OAKLAND	7-9	5.01	25	24	0	127.2	130	27	92	
						Las Vegas (AAA)	2-3	6.04	6	6	0	28.1	31	10	26	
65	Tyler Ferguson	R-R	6-4	225	10/5/93	OAKLAND	4-2	3.68	48	0	2	51.1	32	24	62	
						Las Vegas (AAA)	2-2	3.49	26	0	5	28.1	27	11	43	
70	J.T. Ginn	R-R	6-2	200	5/20/99	OAKLAND	1-1	4.24	8	6	0	34.0	36	9	29	
						Las Vegas (AAA)	4-3	5.72	15	14	0	72.1	80	30	69	
						Midland (AA)	4-1	4.15	6	6	0	30.1	31	10	28	
63	Hogan Harris	R-L	6-3	230	12/26/96	OAKLAND	4-4	2.86	21	9	0	72.1	65	33	61	
						Las Vegas (AAA)	3-4	6.35	13	13	0	56.2	63	39	65	
	Gunnar Hoglund	L-R	6-4	220	12/17/99	Las Vegas (AAA)	0-3	5.88	5	5	0	26.0	25	10	22	
						Midland (AA)	9-4	2.84	19	18	0	104.2	78	27	97	
67	Grant Holman	R-R	6-6	250	5/31/00	OAKLAND	1-1	4.02	18	0	0	15.2	17	9	16	
						Las Vegas (AAA)	4-0	0.92	23	0	3	29.1	13	13	30	
						Midland (AA)	0-0	0.00	17	0	6	19.1	12	9	24	
64	Will Klein	R-R	6-5	230	11/28/99	OAKLAND	0-0	27.00	3	0	0	1.2	2	4	1	
						Las Vegas (AAA)	0-1	5.06	4	0	0	5.1	6	5	5	
						KANSAS CITY	1-0	6.35	5	0	0	5.2	10	2	6	
						Omaha (AAA)	2-1	3.58	34	0	9	37.2	25	27	38	
57	Jacob Lopez	L-L	6-4	220	3/11/98	TAMPA BAY	0-0	5.23	4	1	0	10.1	5	7	8	
						Durham (AAA)	4-7	4.26	21	19	0	88.2	71	45	106	
	Anthony Maldonado	R-R	6-4	220	2/6/98	MIAMI	1-1	5.68	16	1	1	19.0	21	7	11	
						Jacksonville (AAA)	4-4	4.66	33	0	5	46.1	46	22	53	
48	T.J. McFarland	L-L	6-3	200	6/8/89	OAKLAND	2-4	3.81	79	0	0	56.2	53	17	39	
46	Luis Medina	R-R	6-1	175	5/3/99	OAKLAND	2-4	5.18	8	8	0	40.0	43	20	32	
						Las Vegas (AAA)	0-0	10.50	2	2	0	6.0	8	3	7	
						ACL Athletics (R)	0-1	27.00	1	1	0	2.0	6	0	3	
19	Mason Miller	R-R	6-5	200	8/24/98	OAKLAND	2-2	2.49	55	0	28	65.0	36	21	104	
	Noah Murdock	R-R	6-8	205	8/20/98	Omaha (AAA)	1-0	3.76	30	0	1	38.1	27	26	46	
						NW Arkansas (AA)	0-0	2.22	16	0	0	24.1	16	15	26	
47	Michel Otañez	R-R	6-4	218	7/3/97	OAKLAND	1-0	3.44	36	0	1	34.0	27	20	55	
						Las Vegas (AAA)	7-1	5.35	29	0	1	37.0	30	25	55	
38	JP Sears	R-L	5-11	180	2/19/96	OAKLAND	11-13	4.38	32	32	0	180.2	172	49	137	
40	Luis Severino	R-R	6-2	218	2/20/94	NEW YORK NL	11-7	3.91	31	31	0	182.0	166	60	161	
28	Mitch Spence	R-R	6-1	185	5/6/98	OAKLAND	8-10	4.58	35	24	0	151.1	165	44	126	
59	Jeffrey Springs	L-L	6-3	218	9/20/92	TAMPA BAY	2-2	3.27	7	7	0	33.0	34	11	37	
						Durham (AAA)	0-3	4.50	9	9	0	30.0	33	4	31	
						FCL Rays (R)	0-0	4.50	3	3	0	2.0	5	1	5	
	Justin Sterner	R-R	6-1	215	8/29/96	TAMPA BAY	0-0	2.25	2	0	0	4.0	5	1	4	
						Durham (AAA)	2-4	3.28	34	1	2	46.2	35	17	60	
30	Ken Waldichuk	L-L	6-4	220	1/8/98	INJURED — Missed Season										
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
23	Shea Langeliers	R-R	6-0	205	11/18/97	OAKLAND	.224	137	482	58	108	29	80	41	145	4
52	Kyle McCann	L-R	6-2	217	12/2/97	OAKLAND	.236	54	140	13	33	5	15	16	59	0
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
	CJ Alexander	L-R	6-4	215	7/17/96	KANSAS CITY	.125	4	8	0	1	0	0	0	3	0
						Omaha (AAA)	.303	82	323	56	98	16	54	23	77	2
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.294	12	51	7	15	3	14	8	8	0
20	Zack Gelof	R-R	6-2	205	10/19/99	OAKLAND	.211	138	497	60	105	17	49	38	188	25
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.125	2	8	1	1	1	2	1	3	0
77	Brett Harris	R-R	6-2	208	6/24/98	OAKLAND	.146	36	103	15	15	3	12	17	25	0
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.281	74	270	52	76	8	45	41	62	6
						ACL Athletics (R)	.333	1	3	2	1	1	2	1	0	0
2	Darell Hernaiz	R-R	5-11	190	8/3/01	OAKLAND	.192	48	120	8	23	1	12	11	27	1
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.331	35	142	23	47	5	19	12	22	6
12	Max Schuemann	R-R	5-11	186	6/11/97	OAKLAND	.220	133	396	55	87	7	34	47	119	14
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.174	6	23	2	4	0	1	5	8	1
21	Tyler Soderstrom	L-R	6-2	200	11/24/01	OAKLAND	.233	61	189	18	44	9	26	20	53	0
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.279	33	122	22	34	10	27	16	35	0
13	Gio Urshela	R-R	6-0	215	10/11/91	DETROIT	.243	92	300	25	73	5	37	19	49	0
						Toledo (AAA)	.625	3	8	2	5	0	1	1	1	0
						ATLANTA	.265	36	132	9	35	4	15	4	23	0
5	Jacob Wilson	R-R	6-2	190	3/30/02	OAKLAND	.250	28	92	11	23	0	3	8	10	0
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.396	26	106	26	42	4	17	9	5	0
						Midland (AA)	.455	22	88	18	40	3	19	2	10	2
						ACL Athletics (R)	.571	5	14	4	8	0	3	3	0	0
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
22	Miguel Andujar	R-R	6-0	211	3/2/95	OAKLAND	.285	75	302	31	86	4	30	13	42	3
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.389	5	18	3	7	0	6	1	2	0
33	JJ Bleday	L-L	6-1	205	11/10/97	OAKLAND	.243	159	572	74	139	20	60	67	125	2
15	Seth Brown	L-L	6-1	223	7/13/92	OAKLAND	.231	124	372	32	86	14	44	25	112	4
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.403	16	72	16	29	7	24	3	15	2
4	Lawrence Butler	L-R	6-3	210	7/10/00	OAKLAND	.262	125	412	63	108	22	57	35	108	18
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.255	27	110	25	28	4	9	16	25	7
	Denzel Clarke	R-R	6-4	220	5/1/00	Midland (AA)	.269	116	431	74	116	13	53	39	143	36
25	Brent Rooker	R-R	6-3	225	11/1/94	OAKLAND	.293	145	546	82	160	39	112	59	177	11
1	Esteury Ruiz	R-R	6-0	169	2/15/99	OAKLAND	.200	29	55	10	11	2	8	4	20	5
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.326	11	43	6	14	3	8	6	10	7
						Stockton (A)	.545	4	11	3	6	0	5	3	3	1
						ACL Athletics (R)	.000	1	4	0	0	0	1	0	3	0



Houston ASTROS

2025 PREDICTION

1st

AL WEST

2024 FINISH: 1st (88-73)

A transformative offseason altered the Astros' core but not their championship aspirations. The lineup will look different with Kyle Tucker traded, Alex Bregman exiting in free agency and Christian Walker and Isaac Paredes added to the infield. Trading Tucker, a homegrown star, a year before his free agency deviated from the franchise's approach over the past decade. But it still returns a promising starting rotation and a bullpen anchored by closer Josh Hader. The Astros had a streak of seven consecutive American League Championship Series appearances snapped in 2024 and might no longer be a prohibitive AL favorite, but they are built to contend for an eighth AL West title in nine years.

ROTATION

Framber Valdez and Hunter Brown are a formidable one-two punch. Brown turned around a terrible start in 2024, emerging as a potential ace. Valdez, who currently holds that title in Houston, can be a free agent next winter. Ronel Blanco led the rotation with a 2.80 ERA last year, and whether the 31-year-old can replicate his breakout is a key question. Blanco and Spencer Arrighetti set career highs in innings, worth noting for a staff that has lost several starters to elbow injuries in recent years. One, Luis Garcia, is tentatively set to return, though what workload Garcia — or Lance McCullers Jr., who last pitched in 2022 — will shoulder is unclear. Hayden Wesneski, acquired in the Tucker trade, will compete for a spot in a six-man rotation.

BULLPEN

Hader converted 34-of-38 save chances and was dominant at times in his first season with the Astros since signing a five-year, \$95 million contract. But his 3.80 ERA was more than a run above his career mark, and he allowed 12 home runs in 71 innings, an issue to address this season. Ryan Pressly's transition to a set-up role was far from seamless. Bryan Abreu has the stuff to be the primary setup man, if needed, but the Astros must be wary of overuse after Abreu appeared in 78 games last season. The middle relief will be sorted out in spring training. Tayler Scott was a pleasant surprise in 2024 before ending the season on the injured list. Bryan King, Shawn Dubin and Kaleb Ort return to compete for roles. Forrest Whitley is a wild card; the former top prospect retains an alluring arm but is out of minor-league options.

MIDDLE INFIELD

Jose Altuve had a strange 2024. He posted a 20-20 season and won the AL Silver Slugger award at second base. He also recorded his lowest slugging percentage and OPS in a full season since 2013. His chase and whiff rates increased, and he exceeded 100 strikeouts for the first time in 14 major-league seasons. Altuve, 34, has defied convention his entire career, and he still ranked sixth in the majors in hits, so whether all that warrants concern for Houston's dynamic leadoff man remains to be seen. Jeremy Peña compiled a durable and illustrative



Yordan Alvarez

Daikin Park

Opened: 2000 • Capacity: 41,168
Left: 315' Center: 409' Right: 326'
Tickets: 713-259-8000
mlb.com/ASTROS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Highest American League
single-season bullpen strand rate,
2022-24

1. 2024 Guardians	78.5
2. 2022 Astros	76.8
3. 2023 Astros	76.6
4. 2024 Astros	75.7
5. 2022 Yankees	75.5

KEN BLAZE-IMAGN IMAGES

season, providing reliable defense at shortstop and league-average offensive production. Peña did trim his strikeouts, steal 20 bases and flash some power.

CORNERS

Walker, signed to a three-year, \$60 million deal, promises a significant upgrade at first base. The Astros extracted the fifth-lowest OPS and fewest defensive runs saved from the position in 2024 — and still owe \$19.5 million this year to José Abreu after releasing him. But they landed a well-rounded player in Walker, who won a Gold Glove each of the last three years with Arizona and hit 95 home runs in that span. Paredes draws the task of replacing Bregman, a franchise cornerstone who won a Gold Glove last year. Paredes is not as strong a

defender nor as discerning a hitter, and some drop-off in third-base production may be expected. But he did pop 31 home runs in 2023 for the Rays, and his pull-heavy approach is tailored to Daikin Park.

OUTFIELD

Tucker's exit left this group looking thin. Chas McCormick will likely begin the season in right field; he slumped to a 66 OPS+ last year after a breakout 2023 campaign. Jake Meyers was a Gold Glove finalist in center field but posted an 85 OPS-plus. Houston would prefer to limit Yordan Alvarez's time in left field to keep him healthy. Mauricio Dubón can play left, but some form of platoon there is likely given Dubón, Meyers and McCormick all hit right-handed.

That could involve

Taylor Trammell, a low-profile trade acquisition, prospect Jacob Melton or an outside addition. Zach Dezenzo, a right-handed hitter, could join the left-field mix if he claims a roster spot. A rebound by McCormick, who hit 22 homers two seasons ago, would be valuable.

CATCHING

Yainer Diaz and Victor Caratini return as the primary and backup catchers, respectively. Diaz provided the offensive boost the Astros sought in making him the starter last season, compiling a 118 OPS-plus and 84 RBIs, second-most on the team. Astros staff insist they were also pleased with his progress in game-planning and defense, though Diaz's framing metrics rated among the sport's lowest. Caratini quietly proved a valuable acquisition, posting a 113 OPS



Jose Altuve

PROJECTED LINEUP

LINEUP

2B	Jose Altuve (R)
3B	Isaac Paredes (R)
DH	Yordan Alvarez (L)
1B	Christian Walker (R)
C	Yainer Diaz (R)
SS	Jeremy Peña (R)
RF	Chas McCormick (R)
CF	Jake Meyers (R)
LF	Mauricio Dubón (R)

BENCH

C	Victor Caratini (S)
1B	Jon Singleton (L)
UTIL	Zach Dezenzo (R)
OF	Taylor Trammell (L)

ROTATION

LHP	Framber Valdez
RHP	Hunter Brown
RHP	Ronel Blanco
RHP	Hayden Wesneski
RHP	Spencer Arrighetti
RHP	Luis Garcia

BULLPEN

LHP	Josh Hader (C)
RHP	Ryan Pressly
RHP	Bryan Abreu
RHP	Taylor Scott
LHP	Bryan King
RHP	Shawn Dubin
RHP	Forrest Whitley

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE ASTROS “Does the Kyle Tucker trade mean it’s the end of the Astros as we know them? They’ve replaced Carlos Correa and George Springer before, so I wouldn’t be so sure. They got Isaac Paredes back from the Cubs for Tucker, and he’ll be a better Astro than a Cub because of the dimensions in left field. Christian Walker benefits from that, too, and he’s terrific in the field. They need Chas McCormick to rebound, and it looks like Jake Meyers is just a defensive-type guy. But their pitching should still be good enough to contend. They started off so badly last year that they were chasing wins for a while, which put some of their relievers in spots they weren’t used to. When they got above water, the back-end guys like Josh Hader, Ryan Pressly and Bryan Abreu were able to settle in. They’ll be better this year. Hunter Brown and Ronel Blanco proved themselves last year, Framber Valdez is an ace (if they don’t trade him) and Spencer Arrighetti has a good feel for pitching. They think Hayden Wesneski is ready to break out, too. So they should be covered in the rotation, but they’re still somewhat thin, depth-wise.”

while making 55 starts at catcher and eight at first base, in the first season of a two-year deal. Both helped guide a pitching staff that ranked sixth in the majors in ERA. César Salazar returns as a third option if Diaz or Caratini goes down.

DH/BENCH

Alvarez will be the primary designated hitter following another prolific season in which he slugged 35 home runs, ranked fifth among qualified players in OPS (.959) and had a higher OPS against left-handed pitchers (1.029) than righthanders (.924). Alvarez could be the only left-handed regular in their order. Jon Singleton, a left-handed hitter, is a bench option after Walker’s addition. Caratini, a switch-hitter, provides a pinch-hit option from both sides of the plate. He and Dubón were the Astros’ most effective pinch-hitters last year. Dubón offers coverage at every defensive position except pitcher and catcher.

MANAGEMENT

Joe Espada, managing his first season in affiliated baseball, garnered praise inside and outside the organization for his calm and steady hand as the Astros turned around a 12-24 start to win their division. Houston’s lineup again projects to rely heavily on everyday players. Still, Espada showed a willingness to deploy his bench last season. The Astros logged the ninth-fewest pinch-hit at-bats in the majors, but their .263 average in those situations ranked third. Astros relievers entered the second-fewest games with runners on base and made the fourth-fewest appearances spanning more than three outs, offering further insight into Espada’s tendencies. Guiding a team that underwent high-profile offseason changes will present a new challenge for his second year at the helm.

FINAL ANALYSIS

It is difficult to claim that the Astros will be a stronger team in 2025 after parting with their best player, Tucker, and a franchise pillar, Bregman. But they return enough talent to contend again in the AL West. Owner Jim Crane has declared that the Astros’ championship window will never close in his tenure. This season could prove the most revealing since the Astros emerged from a rebuild nearly a decade ago about whether Crane is right.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

BIG CHILL The Astros’ stadium, known previously as Minute Maid Park, is entering its first season under a new name, Daikin Park. Daikin Comfort Technologies North America, Inc., a Japan-based manufacturer of air-conditioning products, entered into a 15-year naming rights agreement that will run through 2039. Houston’s downtown ballpark opened in 2000 as Enron Field, its name for two seasons, and was dubbed Astros Field for several months before Minute Maid acquired naming rights in June 2002. Fans might be slower to embrace this name change after 24 seasons of attending games at the “Juice Box.”

ALTUVE’S ASCENT Jose Altuve is entering the first season of a five-year extension that should give him the chance to chase 3,000 career hits in an Astros uniform. Altuve is at 2,232 career hits and would need to average 154 hits across the next five seasons to reach 3,000. The 34-year-old has produced at least 154 hits in each season in which he has played at least 130 games. Altuve should pass Jeff Bagwell (2,314) on the Astros’ career hits list this year, if healthy, which would leave him second behind Craig Biggio (3,060).

NEW FACE Joe Espada has one newcomer on his coaching staff for his second year as manager in third base coach Tony Perezchica, who replaces Gary Pettis. Perezchica, hired from Arizona, is a seasoned infield instructor who Espada hopes will help develop Houston’s infield prospects — he helped Christian Walker become an elite defender in Arizona. The Astros were also one of the majors’ least aggressive teams last year at taking the extra base, while the Diamondbacks were among the most opportune.

Schedule

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AWAY

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STATISTICIAN

32 Pitchers used by the Astros last season, a franchise record that reflected rotation injuries and bullpen turnover.

3.65 Pitches seen per plate appearance by Houston hitters last year, fewest in the majors, leading the staff to prioritize more patience this season.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



- **1. Cam Smith, 3B (22)** An impact hitter who could play third base, first or right field.
- **2. Jacob Melton, OF (24)** A left-handed hitter with power potential and speed.
- **3. Brice Matthews, IF (23)** Posted an .865 OPS across four levels last season.
- **4. Walker Janek, C (22)** A defense-first catcher who played 25 games at High-A Asheville.
- **5. Zach Dezenzo, IF (24)** Arguably the Astros' readiest prospect, he could seize a bench role.
- **6. Miguel Ullola, RHP (22)** The hard-throwing RHP has averaged 12.6 strikeouts per nine innings.
- **7. A.J. Blubaugh, RHP (24)** Started 25 games at Triple-A in 2024, went 12-4 with a 3.83 ERA.
- **8. Luis Baez, OF (21)** Hit .263 with 20 homers in 92 games at High-A Asheville in 2024.
- **9. Anderson Brito, RHP (20)** Posted a 1.51 ERA with 82 strikeouts over his first 53.2 minor-league innings.
- **10. Ethan Pecko, RHP (22)** Organization's Minor League Pitcher of the Year.

Astros Roster

General Manager: Dana Brown • Manager: Joe Espada • Coaches: Jason Bell (quality assurance), Alex Cintron (hitting), Dave Clark (first base), Michael Collins, Tommy Kawamura (major league game planning), Omar Lopez (bench), Joshua Miller (pitching), Bill Murphy (pitching), Tony Perezchica (third base), Troy Snitker (hitting)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
52	Bryan Abreu	R-R	6-1	230	4/22/97	HOUSTON	3-3	3.10	78	0	1	78.1	59	32	103	
41	Spencer Arrighetti	R-R	6-2	186	1/2/00	HOUSTON	7-13	4.53	29	28	0	145.0	139	65	171	
						Sugar Land (AAA)	0-0	2.16	2	2	0	8.1	7	7	10	
56	Ronel Blanco	R-R	6-3	265	8/31/93	HOUSTON	13-6	2.80	30	29	0	167.1	114	68	166	
58	Hunter Brown	R-R	6-2	220	8/29/98	HOUSTON	11-9	3.49	31	30	0	170.0	156	60	179	
73	Luis Contreras	R-R	6-1	175	4/29/96	HOUSTON	0-0	9.00	5	0	0	6.0	7	2	6	
						Sugar Land (AAA)	4-1	1.74	47	0	2	46.2	22	20	50	
66	Shawn Dubin	R-R	6-0	164	9/6/95	HOUSTON	1-1	4.17	31	2	2	45.1	45	26	49	
						Sugar Land (AAA)	2-0	3.60	10	0	0	10.0	8	5	13	
68	J.P. France	R-R	6-0	198	4/4/95	HOUSTON	0-3	7.46	5	5	0	25.1	31	12	22	
						Sugar Land (AAA)	0-0	7.36	1	1	0	3.2	4	4	3	
77	Luis Garcia	R-R	6-1	248	12/13/96	Corpus Christi (AA)	0-1	27.00	1	1	0	1.1	3	1	2	
						FCL Astros (R)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	1.0	0	0	2	
	Colton Gordon	L-L	6-4	225	12/20/98	Sugar Land (AAA)	8-2	3.94	25	24	0	123.1	112	39	124	
67	Ryan Gusto	R-R	6-4	232	3/11/99	Sugar Land (AAA)	8-6	3.70	29	26	0	148.1	135	53	141	
71	Josh Hader	L-L	6-3	188	4/7/94	HOUSTON	8-8	3.80	71	0	34	71.0	43	25	105	
72	Nick Hernandez	R-R	6-1	212	12/30/94	HOUSTON	0-0	7.88	5	0	0	8.0	10	1	10	
						Sugar Land (AAA)	5-4	2.83	26	0	0	28.2	18	14	36	
						El Paso (AAA)	0-0	1.90	17	0	0	23.2	19	9	34	
53	Cristian Javier	R-R	6-1	210	3/26/97	HOUSTON	3-1	3.89	7	7	0	34.2	30	19	27	
						Corpus Christi (AA)	0-1	8.10	1	1	0	3.1	3	2	3	
74	Bryan King	R-L	6-1	205	11/5/96	HOUSTON	1-0	2.39	28	0	0	26.1	20	10	32	
						Sugar Land (AAA)	1-0	2.21	34	0	3	36.2	28	14	44	
43	Lance McCullers Jr.	L-R	6-1	200	10/2/93	INJURED — Missed Season										
63	Kaleb Ort	R-R	6-4	248	2/5/92	HOUSTON	1-1	2.55	22	0	0	24.2	16	4	26	
						Sugar Land (AAA)	0-0	1.13	16	0	1	16.0	9	8	22	
						Norfolk (AAA)	0-1	12.08	14	0	2	12.2	21	10	16	
55	Ryan Pressly	R-R	6-2	207	12/15/88	HOUSTON	2-3	3.49	59	0	4	56.2	58	18	58	
54	Taylor Scott	R-R	6-3	185	6/1/92	HOUSTON	7-3	2.23	62	1	0	68.2	45	35	71	
62	Bennett Sousa	L-L	6-3	220	4/6/95	INJURED — Missed Season										
59	Framber Valdez	R-L	5-11	230	11/19/93	HOUSTON	15-7	2.91	28	28	0	176.1	140	55	169	
	Hayden Wesneski	R-R	6-3	210	12/5/97	CHICAGO NL	3-6	3.86	28	7	0	67.2	56	21	67	
						Iowa (AAA)	1-0	3.45	7	3	0	15.2	16	5	17	
60	Forrest Whitley	R-R	6-7	208	9/15/97	HOUSTON	0-0	0.00	3	0	0	3.1	5	3	5	
						Sugar Land (AAA)	4-1	1.89	32	0	0	33.1	25	15	45	
						FCL Astros (R)	0-0	13.50	1	1	0	0.2	2	2	1	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
17	Victor Caratini	S-R	5-11	225	8/17/93	HOUSTON	.269	87	245	30	66	8	30	23	53	0
						Corpus Christi (AA)	.400	2	5	2	2	1	2	1	0	0
						FCL Astros (R)	.400	2	5	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
21	Yainer Diaz	R-R	6-0	195	9/21/98	HOUSTON	.299	148	585	70	175	16	84	24	107	2
18	César Salazar	L-R	5-8	198	3/15/96	HOUSTON	.320	12	25	5	8	0	8	2	6	0
						Sugar Land (AAA)	.253	78	261	37	66	8	50	45	45	1
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
27	Jose Altuve	R-R	5-6	167	5/6/90	HOUSTON	.295	153	628	94	185	20	65	47	119	22
9	Zach Dezenzo	R-R	6-5	220	5/11/00	HOUSTON	.242	19	62	5	15	2	8	3	22	0
						Sugar Land (AAA)	.333	25	96	22	32	5	20	15	25	3
						Corpus Christi (AA)	.222	22	81	8	18	2	7	9	23	2
						FCL Astros (R)	.450	5	20	3	9	0	4	2	3	0
19	Isaac Paredes	R-R	5-11	213	2/18/99	TAMPA BAY	.245	101	363	41	89	16	55	52	68	0
						CHICAGO NL	.223	52	179	23	40	3	25	24	37	1
3	Jeremy Peña	R-R	6-0	202	9/22/97	HOUSTON	.266	157	602	78	160	15	70	25	111	20
28	Jon Singleton	L-L	6-0	256	9/18/91	HOUSTON	.234	119	355	46	83	13	42	47	111	0
13	Christian Walker	R-R	6-0	208	3/28/91	ARIZONA	.251	130	479	72	120	26	84	55	133	2
10	Shay Whitcomb	R-R	6-0	202	9/28/98	HOUSTON	.220	20	41	1	9	0	5	5	8	0
						Sugar Land (AAA)	.293	108	413	73	121	25	91	53	95	26
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
44	Yordan Alvarez	L-R	6-5	237	6/27/97	HOUSTON	.308	147	552	88	170	35	86	69	95	6
89	Kenedy Corona	R-R	5-10	189	3/21/00	Sugar Land (AAA)	.190	20	63	5	12	1	6	5	19	3
						Corpus Christi (AA)	.219	78	279	34	61	2	23	34	77	24
14	Mauricio Dubón	R-R	6-0	173	7/19/94	HOUSTON	.269	137	402	45	108	4	47	16	55	3
13	Cooper Hummel	S-R	5-9	198	11/28/94	HOUSTON	.000	6	8	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
						Sugar Land (AAA)	.277	101	350	55	97	10	59	79	89	15
4	Pedro León	R-R	5-9	170	5/28/98	HOUSTON	.100	7	20	2	2	0	0	1	10	2
						Sugar Land (AAA)	.299	118	469	78	140	24	90	43	144	29
20	Chas McCormick	R-L	6-0	208	4/19/95	HOUSTON	.211	94	242	32	51	5	27	17	72	8
						Sugar Land (AAA)	.308	3	13	1	4	0	1	1	5	1
						Corpus Christi (AA)	.167	5	18	0	3	0	1	0	5	1
6	Jake Meyers	R-L	6-0	200	6/18/96	HOUSTON	.219	148	461	51	101	13	61	35	117	11
	Taylor Trammell	L-L	6-2	220	9/13/97	LOS ANGELES NL	.000	5	6	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
						NEW YORK AL	1.000	5	1	2	1	0	0	1	0	0
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	.256	106	336	65	86	18	63	63	109	20

Los Angeles **ANGELS**

2025 PREDICTION

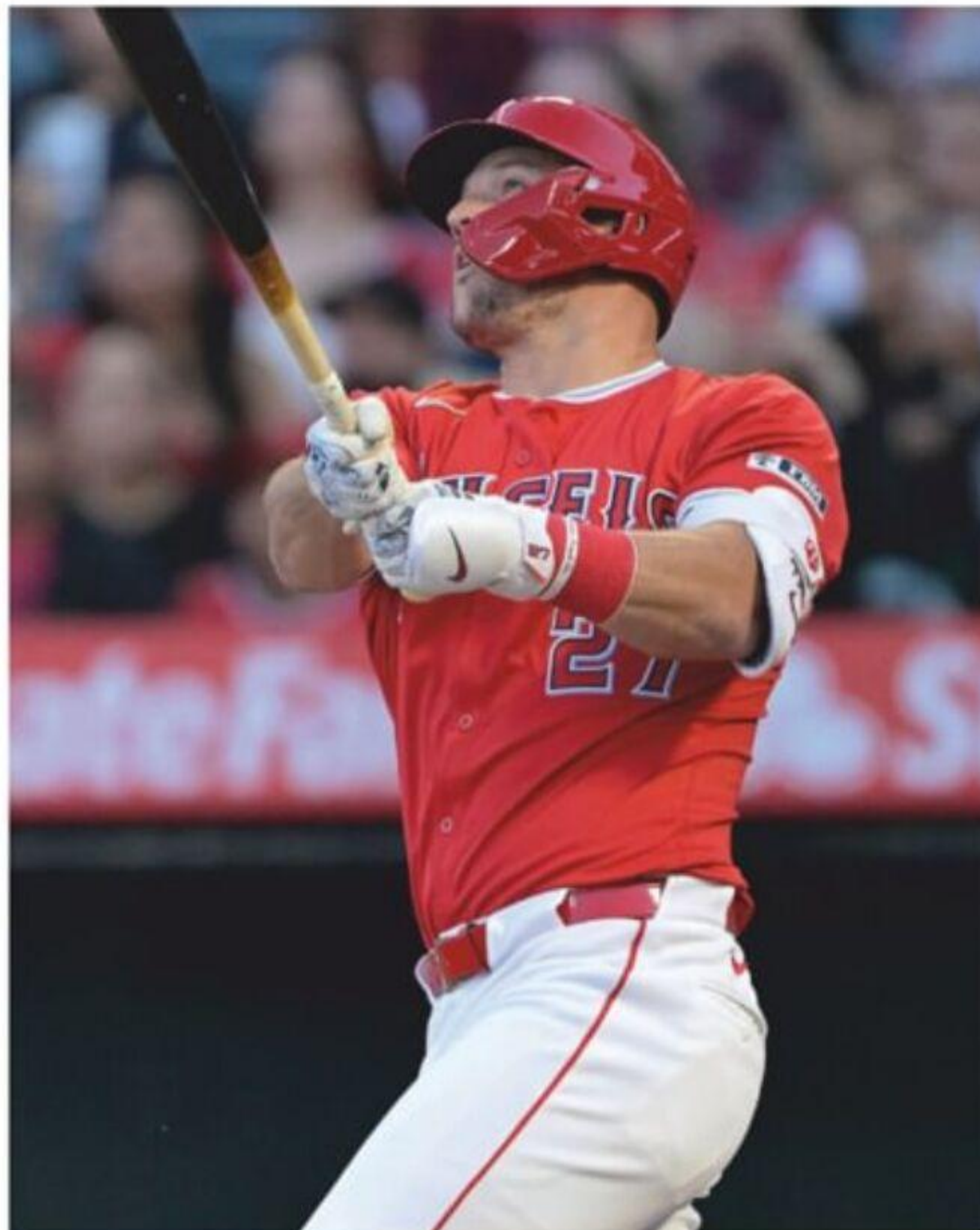
5TH

AL WEST

2024 FINISH: 5TH (63-99)

When Shohei Ohtani left the Los Angeles Angels, it was clear that dark days were ahead for the franchise. While Ohtani was winning his third MVP and first World Series with the Los Angeles Dodgers, things got very dark indeed for his former team. The Angels plummeted to the worst season in franchise history (63-99).

As their most recent winning season (2015) and playoff appearance (2014) retreat further into the rear-view mirror, there are few signs that things will turn around any time soon. The talent is simply not there — nor is it coming from a farm system considered to be among the bleakest in baseball. The only thing that can possibly make the Angels worth following in 2025 is a healthy Mike Trout — something else that hasn't been seen in Anaheim for years.



Mike Trout

ROTATION

Not that long ago, the Angels were optimistic about a future rotation built around Patrick Sandoval, Griffin Canning and Reid Detmers. Flash forward — Sandoval was a non-tendered free agent after undergoing Tommy John surgery in June, Canning was traded to the Braves (who non-tendered him) and Detmers was demoted to Triple-A for much of the 2024 season. Instead, the Angels have opened Arte Moreno's checkbook to try to improve a starting rotation that had a 4.97 ERA in 2024 (28th in the majors) and 4.47 in 2023 (19th). Tyler Anderson signed for three years and \$39 million before the 2023 season. He has been reliable, making 56 starts in the first two years of the deal, and much better in the second year — a 10-15 record and 3.81 ERA. Now the Angels have invested in lefthander Yusei Kikuchi and righthander Kyle Hendricks. Kikuchi was expensive (three years, \$63 million) but immediately goes to the front of this rotation. Hendricks finished third in the NL Cy Young voting during the Cubs' championship season in 2016 but has fallen on hard times since then (a 5.92 ERA over 130.2 innings last season). He will fill out the rotation with promising José Soriano — and maybe Detmers.

BULLPEN

When there are so few leads to protect, the relevance of a strong bullpen is lessened. At least, that's what the Angels seem to be saying after doing very little to upgrade a weak group over the winter. They traded three pieces of the 2024 bullpen at the in-season deadline, including closer Carlos Estévez, who netted two top prospects from the Phillies (pitchers George Klassen and Sam Aldeghe-ri). The most intriguing member of the 2025 bullpen (and its nominal closer) is righthander Ben Joyce. Joyce lit up the radar gun in 2024, averaging 102.1 mph on his fastball and touching 105.5 mph — the third-fastest pitch thrown since pitch-tracking started in 2008. Leading up to Joyce, though, is an uninspiring group that could get an infusion if Robert Stephenson and Chase Silseth return in 2025. The Angels signed Stephenson to a three-year, \$33 million contract last January — and then he underwent Tommy John surgery in April. Silseth also had elbow surgery (though not Tommy John) in August.

Angel Stadium

Opened: 1966 • Capacity: 45,517
 Left: 347' Center: 396' Right: 350'
 Tickets: 888-796-4256
mlb.com/ANGELS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Most single-season intentional walks issued, 2023-24

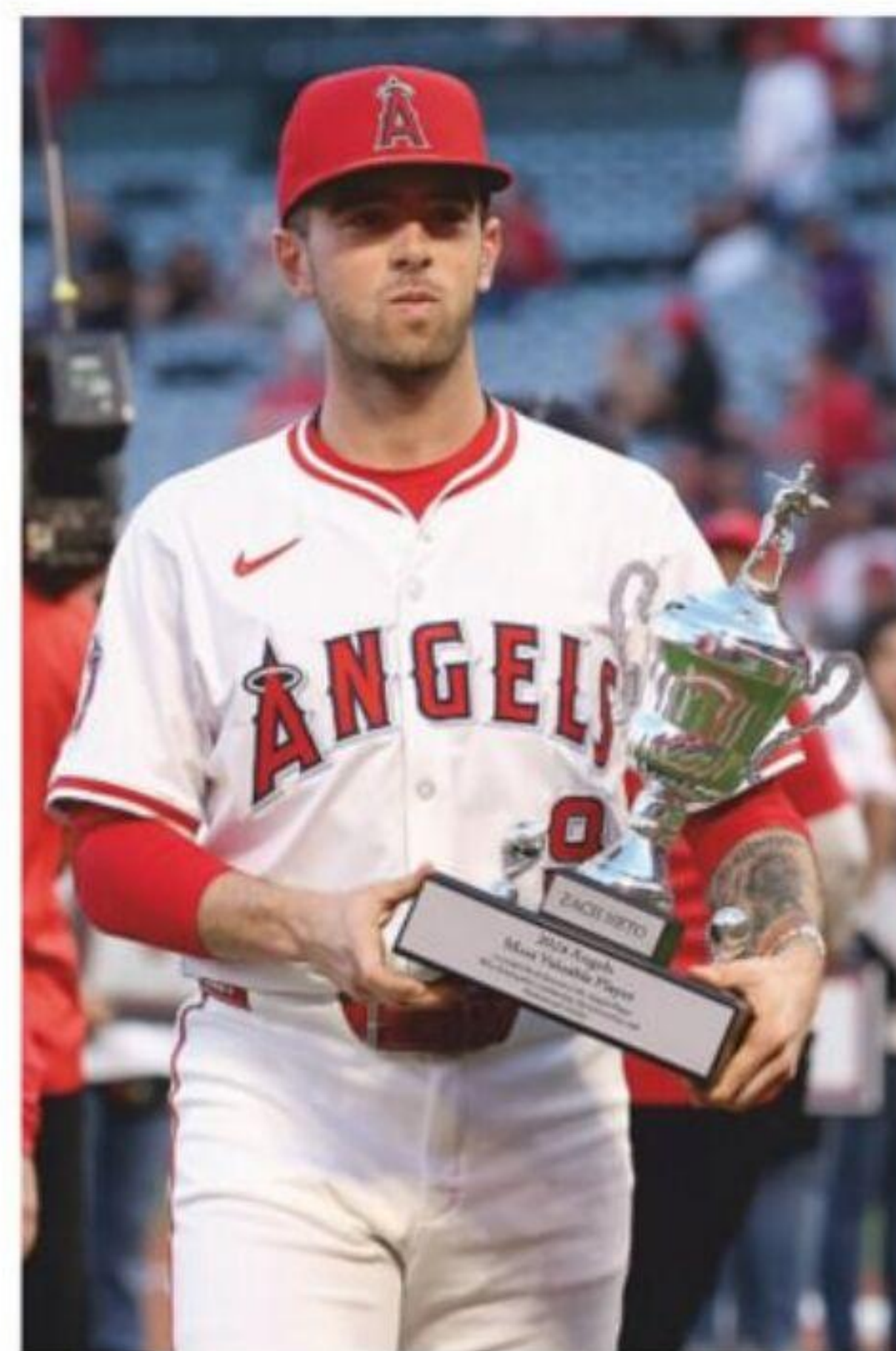
1. 2023 Angels	41
2. 2024 Angels	34
2. 2024 Athletics	34
4. 2023 Athletics	33
5. 2024 Diamondbacks	32

MIDDLE INFIELD

The Angels' everyday lineup has a hole in the middle. In 2024, nine different players started games at second base — from Brandon Drury and Michael Stefanic to Keston Hiura and Ehire Adrianza. That group combined for six home runs (last in the majors), a .224 batting average (tied for 23rd) and .593 OPS (29th). They found an answer at shortstop in 24-year-old Zach Neto. But Neto ended the season with a shoulder injury and underwent surgery that could sideline him early in 2025. Luis Rengifo was having a good year in a utility role, batting .300 with 24 stolen bases through 78 games. But he underwent wrist surgery in August. The Angels could certainly use a healthy return to form for Rengifo.

CORNERS

The hot corner has a tortuous history in Anaheim. Signing Anthony Rendon to a seven-year, \$245 million contract in December 2019 was supposed to change that. But third base remains a black hole. Rendon has played a total of only 205 games in the past four seasons due to injuries, and (with two years and \$77 million left on that contract) the Angels have talked of turning him into a part-time player while searching for a new answer at third. First base is one of the positions Rendon could move to. That position belonged to Nolan Schanuel in 2024. The Angels' 2023 first-round pick hit .250 with 13 home runs in 147 games last year.



Zach Neto

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

LF	Taylor Ward (R)
2B	Luis Rengifo (S)
CF	Mike Trout (R)
DH	Jorge Soler (R)
3B	Anthony Rendon (R)
C	Logan O'Hoppe (R)
1B	Nolan Schanuel (L)
RF	Jo Adell (R)
SS	Zach Neto (R)

■ BENCH

IF	Scott Kingery (R)
C	Travis d'Arnaud (R)
OF	Mickey Moniak (L)
IF	Kevin Newman (R)
DH	Niko Kavadas (L)

■ ROTATION

LHP	Yusei Kikuchi
LHP	Tyler Anderson
RHP	Kyle Hendricks
RHP	José Soriano
LHP	Reid Detmers

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Ben Joyce (C)
LHP	Brock Burke
RHP	Ryan Zeferjahn
RHP	Hans Crouse
LHP	José Suarez
RHP	Robert Stephenson
LHP	José Quijada

OUTFIELD

For eight years, Trout was on a fast track to Cooperstown as a modern-day Mickey Mantle. He won three MVP awards and finished second four other times. But Trout has been unable to stay on the field since then. Injuries have cut short each of his past four seasons, most recently a twice-torn meniscus in his left knee that required surgery twice last year. He's 33, and the Angels have to come to grips with the likelihood that Trout's best days are behind him. They've talked to him about spending less time in center field in 2025 and more time at DH or in a corner outfield spot. The Angels can consider that because outfield might be their deepest roster position. Taylor Ward, Mickey Moniak and Jo Adell each started at least 105 games in the outfield with Ward leading the team in home runs (25). Adell hit just .207 but did contribute 20 home runs.

CATCHING

If there was one position that seemed to be in good hands, it was catcher. So of course, one of the Angels' first offseason moves was to sign a catcher. Veter-

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE ANGELS "They did what they always do: a bunch of minor stuff that doesn't really move the needle. Yusei Kikuchi is a little more than that, to be fair. He's a good mid-rotation guy who threw more sliders to both sides of the plate with Houston. That backdoor slider to righties ended up being a money pitch for him. José Soriano and Tyler Anderson are pretty good, but I don't think Kyle Hendricks has anything left, and their closer Ben Joyce throws hard, but it looks real light, like it's gonna be easy to square up. Their lineup has a few guys I like, especially Zach Neto, but his shoulder injury is gonna hurt them. Logan O'Hoppe had a miserable second half, but he's a stud. He reminds me so much of J.T. Realmuto. Nolan Schanuel has a good eye but no power; he's a Dave Magadan type at first base. Mickey Moniak never walks; he's toolsy, but he's not going to be an impact guy. Anthony Rendon just doesn't want to play. Mike Trout does — but he's missed so much time that, crazy as it sounds, you just don't know what you've got with him anymore."

an Travis d’Arnaud signed a two-year, \$12 million contract to mentor Logan O’Hoppe. The 25-year-old O’Hoppe started 121 games at catcher last season and slumped down the stretch. An All-Star in 2022, d’Arnaud could give O’Hoppe more frequent rest while helping him improve at calling the game.

DH/BENCH

Looking to add offense to a lineup that ranked 28th in the majors in runs scored, batting average, slugging percentage and OPS last year, the Angels acquired Jorge Soler from the Braves. Soler will be counted on to be a major threat in the middle of the Angels’ lineup — whether he does that as the DH or moves to the outfield to accommodate Trout. If Trout stays healthy and Neto returns from his shoulder surgery, it pushes players like Moniak and utilitymen Scott Kingery and Kevin Newman to reserve roles, strengthening the bench.

MANAGEMENT

At 72, Ron Washington was a surprise choice as the Angels’ new manager last year. But he adequately fills the caretaker role as the team tries to build a new core of young players. Neither he nor general manager Perry Minasian (given a two-year extension) figure to be around when the Angels return to contender status some day in the distant future.

FINAL ANALYSIS

When the Detroit Tigers clinched their first playoff spot since 2014 on the last weekend of the 2024 regular season, it left the Angels with the longest playoff drought (since 2014). They figure to hold that distinction for some time to come. With Ohtani departed, Trout apparently in the twilight of his career and one of the weakest farm systems in baseball, the building blocks of a contending team are woefully lacking in Anaheim.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

WHO’S ON SECOND? The Angels had the fourth-worst record in the major leagues in 2024. But when the draft lottery was held during the Winter Meetings in December, the Angels wound up with the second pick overall in the 2025 draft. It is the Angels’ highest draft position since they chose Darin Erstad No. 1 overall in 1995. “It’s exciting,” general manager Perry Minasian said. “It’s obviously a huge difference (over a mid-round pick). Our staff is very excited to have the opportunity to pick second.”

ON THE MEND Entering the offseason, the Angels were hopeful that their young shortstop, Zach Neto, would recover from a shoulder injury he suffered on a slide into second base on Sept. 26. Neto missed the final three games of the regular season and tried to rehab the injury for three weeks. His shoulder didn’t respond well enough, and he had surgery in early November. Neto could miss the start of the 2025 season while recovering.

SPRING UPGRADES When the Angels head to spring training in 2025, they will find upgraded facilities. Over the winter, the team renovated its clubhouses at the Tempe Diablo Stadium complex as well as upgrading the weight room and team offices. In addition, pitching and hitting “labs” were added to house the sophisticated technology increasingly used by teams. The Angels have been significantly behind most other teams in that area.

BROTHERLY LOVE Perry Minasian’s brother, Zack, was promoted from vice president of professional scouting to GM under the San Francisco Giants’ new president of baseball operations, Buster Posey. The Minasians are the first brothers to hold GM positions at the same time in major-league history. The brothers got their start in baseball watching their father, also named Zack, serve as the Texas Rangers’ clubhouse manager for 21 years, from 1989 through 2009. All four of Zack’s sons worked as bat boys and clubhouse attendants while growing up.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27 CWS	28	29 CWS
30 CWS	31 STL	1 STL	2 STL	3	4 CLE	5 CLE
6 CLE	7 TB	8 TB	9 TB	10	11 HOU	12 HOU
13 HOU	14	15 TEX	16 TEX	17 TEX	18 SF	19 SF
20 SF	21	22 PIT	23 PIT	24 PIT	25 MIN	26 MIN
27 MIN	28	29 SEA	30 SEA			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 DET	2 DET	3 DET
4 DET	5	6 TOR	7 TOR	8 TOR	9 BAL	10 BAL
11 BAL	12 SD	13 SD	14 SD	15	16 LAD	17 LAD
18 LAD	19 A's	20 A's	21 A's	22 A's	23 MIA	24 MIA
25 MIA	26 NYY	27 NYY	28 NYY	29	30 CLE	31 CLE
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 CLE	2 BOS	3 BOS	4 BOS	5	6 SEA	7 SEA
8 SEA	9 A's	10 A's	11 A's	12	13 BAL	14 BAL
15 BAL	16 NYY	17 NYY	18 NYY	19 NYY	20 HOU	21 HOU
22 HOU	23 BOS	24 BOS	25 BOS	26	27 WAS	28 WAS
29 WAS	30					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 ATL	2 ATL	3 ATL	4 TOR	5 TOR
6 TOR	7 TEX	8 TEX	9 TEX	10 TEX	11 ARI	12 ARI
13 ARI	14	15 ALL-STAR BREAK	16	17	18 PHI	19 PHI
20 PHI	21 NYM	22 NYM	23 NYM	24 SEA	25 SEA	26 SEA
27 SEA	28 TEX	29 TEX	30 TEX	31		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 CWS	2 CWS
3 CWS	4	5 TB	6 TB	7 TB	8 DET	9 DET
10 DET	11 LAD	12 LAD	13 LAD	14	15 A's	16 A's
17 A's	18 CIN	19 CIN	20 CIN	21	22 CHC	23 CHC
24 CHC	25 TEX	26 TEX	27 TEX	28	29 HOU	30 HOU
31 HOU						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 HOU	2 KC	3 KC	4 KC	5 A's	6 A's
7 A's	8 MIN	9 MIN	10 MIN	11 SEA	12 SEA	13 SEA
14 SEA	15	16 MIL	17 MIL	18 MIL	19 COL	20 COL
21 COL	22	23 KC	24 KC	25 KC	26 HOU	27 HOU
28 HOU	29	30				

STATISTICIAN

.456 Angels winning percentage over nine seasons since their last winning record (2015).

389 Games missed by Mike Trout over the past five seasons.

4.97 ERA of Angels starting pitchers in 2024 (only the Marlins and Rockies were higher).

TOP-10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Christian Moore, 2B (22)**
Posted a .322 average and .911 OPS in 23 games at Double-A.

■ **2. Caden Dana, RHP (21)**
Made his big-league debut with three starts in September.

■ **3. George Klassen, RHP (23)**
Struck out 135 in 93 IP across three levels last season.

■ **4. Nelson Rada, OF (19)** Led the Cal League with 55 stolen bases in 2023 as a 17-year-old.

■ **5. Sam Aldegheri, LHP (23)**
Jumped from Double-A to earn three late-season starts.

■ **6. Ryan Johnson, RHP (22)**
Hits 100 mph and has a five-pitch mix.

■ **7. Joswa Lugo, SS (18)** Got \$2.3 million signing bonus as a top international free agent.

■ **8. Dario Laverde, C (20)**
Batted .301 over his final 42 games in the Single-A Cal League.

■ **9. Denzer Guzman, SS (21)**
Struggled offensively after a move to Double-A.

■ **10. Chris Cortez, RHP (22)**
Second-round pick last year could move through the system quickly.

Angels Roster

General Manager: Perry Minasian • Manager: Ron Washington • Coaches: Barry Enright (pitching), Ryan Goins (infield), Steve Karsay (bullpen), Tim Laker (offensive coordinator), Ray Montgomery (bench), Jerry Narron (catching), Jayson Nix (assistant), Bo Porter (first base), Johnny Washington (hitting), Eric Young Sr. (third base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
66	Sam Aldegheri	L-L	6-1	180	9/19/01	LOS ANGELES AL	1-2	4.85	3	3	0	13.0	15	10	10	
						Rocket City (AA)	0-2	5.19	4	4	0	17.1	16	9	25	
						Reading (AA)	0-2	3.60	2	2	0	10.0	9	4	14	
						Jersey Shore (A+)	6-5	3.18	13	13	0	68.0	44	28	95	
31	Tyler Anderson	L-L	6-2	220	12/30/89	LOS ANGELES AL	10-15	3.81	31	31	0	179.1	158	73	142	
40	Sam Bachman	R-R	6-1	235	9/30/99	Salt Lake (AAA)	1-2	5.17	3	3	0	15.2	15	4	7	
						Rocket City (AA)	0-4	5.26	9	9	0	39.1	38	17	34	
						ACL Angels (R)	0-0	1.35	4	4	0	6.2	5	0	9	
46	Brock Burke	L-L	6-4	210	8/4/96	LOS ANGELES AL	2-1	3.54	21	1	0	20.1	16	7	25	
						Round Rock (AAA)	0-0	5.31	16	0	0	20.1	25	13	17	
						TEXAS	0-0	9.22	13	0	0	13.2	21	9	16	
						ACL Rangers (R)	0-0	0.00	2	2	0	2.0	1	0	4	
71	Kelvin Caceres	R-R	6-1	205	1/26/00	INJURED — Missed Season										
52	Hans Crouse	L-R	6-4	180	9/15/98	LOS ANGELES AL	4-3	2.84	25	0	0	25.1	14	17	34	
						Salt Lake (AAA)	3-0	2.27	29	0	2	31.2	22	13	59	
36	Caden Dana	L-R	6-4	215	12/17/03	LOS ANGELES AL	1-2	9.58	3	3	0	10.1	14	7	8	
						Rocket City (AA)	9-7	2.52	23	23	0	135.2	89	39	147	
	Jack Dashwood	L-L	6-6	240	11/17/97	Rocket City (AA)	0-0	2.70	8	0	0	10.0	6	1	15	
48	Reid Detmers	L-L	6-2	210	7/8/99	LOS ANGELES AL	4-9	6.70	17	17	0	87.1	98	38	109	
						Salt Lake (AAA)	6-6	5.54	14	14	0	78.0	82	27	101	
28	Kyle Hendricks	R-R	6-3	190	12/7/89	CHICAGO NL	4-12	5.92	29	24	0	130.2	147	43	87	
						Iowa (AAA)	0-0	2.08	1	1	0	4.1	5	3	6	
						Tennessee (AA)	1-0	3.60	1	1	0	5.0	6	0	7	
44	Ben Joyce	R-R	6-5	225	9/17/00	LOS ANGELES AL	2-0	2.08	31	1	4	34.2	26	14	33	
						Rocket City (AA)	1-0	4.26	18	0	1	19.0	11	11	34	
16	Yusei Kikuchi	L-L	6-0	210	6/17/91	TORONTO	4-9	4.75	22	22	0	115.2	125	30	130	
						HOUSTON	5-1	2.70	10	10	0	60.0	42	14	76	
64	Jack Kochanowicz	L-R	6-7	228	12/22/00	LOS ANGELES AL	2-6	3.99	11	11	0	65.1	68	10	25	
						Rocket City (AA)	5-8	4.50	18	18	0	102.0	103	27	86	
	Garrett McDaniels	L-L	6-2	180	12/15/99	Tulsa (AA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	3.0	2	1	6	
						R. Cucamonga (A)	0-4	3.80	11	7	0	45.0	43	23	44	
						Great Lakes (A+)	5-1	2.49	19	0	1	25.1	19	5	34	
62	Victor Mederos	R-R	6-2	227	6/8/01	LOS ANGELES AL	0-1	11.81	4	0	0	5.1	7	6	5	
						Salt Lake (AAA)	0-0	3.86	3	3	0	9.1	7	2	6	
						Rocket City (AA)	4-8	6.39	20	20	0	88.2	105	48	69	
						Tri-City (A+)	0-1	9.00	1	1	0	6.0	5	2	5	
65	José Quijada	L-L	5-11	215	11/9/95	LOS ANGELES AL	2-2	3.26	22	0	0	19.1	12	17	24	
						Salt Lake (AAA)	0-0	0.00	4	0	0	3.0	1	4	2	
						ACL Angels (R)	0-0	3.86	5	2	0	4.2	4	0	11	
63	Chase Silseth	R-R	6-0	217	5/18/00	LOS ANGELES AL	0-1	6.75	2	2	0	8.0	8	4	12	
						Salt Lake (AAA)	0-3	6.35	7	7	0	28.1	33	18	16	
						ACL Angels (R)	0-0	0.00	2	2	0	7.0	4	0	10	
59	José Soriano	R-R	6-3	220	10/20/98	LOS ANGELES AL	6-7	3.42	22	20	0	113.0	91	45	97	
24	Robert Stephenson	R-R	6-3	205	2/24/93	Salt Lake (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	0.0	0	1	0	
54	José Suarez	L-L	5-10	225	1/3/98	LOS ANGELES AL	1-2	6.02	22	3	1	52.1	57	27	56	
						Salt Lake (AAA)	2-3	6.54	11	11	0	52.1	67	17	62	
56	Ryan Zeferjahn	R-R	6-5	209	2/28/98	LOS ANGELES AL	0-0	2.12	12	0	0	17.0	7	6	18	
						Salt Lake (AAA)	0-0	2.35	5	0	0	7.2	5	1	8	
						Worcester (AAA)	0-3	5.47	18	1	4	24.2	20	17	31	
						Portland (AA)	1-0	0.00	7	0	3	13.2	9	3	22	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
25	Travis d'Arnaud	R-R	6-2	210	2/10/89	ATLANTA	.238	99	307	40	73	15	48	24	89	1
14	Logan O'Hoppe	R-R	6-2	185	2/9/00	LOS ANGELES AL	.244	136	479	64	117	20	56	33	155	2
	Chuckie Robinson	R-R	5-11	215	12/14/94	CHICAGO AL	.129	26	70	2	9	0	0	5	20	0
						Charlotte (AAA)	.246	55	199	22	49	7	32	13	56	0
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
28	Niko Kavadas	L-R	6-1	235	10/27/98	LOS ANGELES AL	.183	30	93	11	17	4	8	11	41	1
						Salt Lake (AAA)	.159	11	44	4	7	2	4	4	18	0
						Worcester (AAA)	.281	83	263	57	74	17	63	58	112	0
	Scott Kingery	R-R	5-9	180	4/29/94	Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.268	125	463	73	124	25	67	34	138	25
9	Zach Neto	R-R	6-0	185	1/31/01	LOS ANGELES AL	.249	155	542	70	135	23	77	39	140	30
10	Kevin Newman	R-R	6-1	195	8/4/93	ARIZONA	.278	111	288	41	80	3	28	15	48	8
						Reno (AAA)	.364	6	22	6	8	1	7	3	8	1
	Ryan Noda	L-L	6-1	217	3/30/96	OAKLAND	.137	36	95	8	13	1	4	14	37	0
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.224	101	348	81	78	22	54	89	134	5
19	Kyren Paris	R-R	6-0	180	11/11/01	LOS ANGELES AL	.118	21	51	4	6	1	5	7	17	1
						Salt Lake (AAA)	.209	37	139	20	29	4	19	16	52	8
						Rocket City (AA)	.091	23	77	8	7	0	7	9	36	8
6	Anthony Rendon	R-R	6-1	200	6/6/90	LOS ANGELES AL	.218	57	206	21	45	0	14	23	35	6
2	Luis Rengifo	S-R	5-10	195	2/26/97	LOS ANGELES AL	.300	78	283	41	85	6	30	16	44	24
18	Nolan Schanuel	L-R	6-4	220	2/14/02	LOS ANGELES AL	.250	147	519	62	130	13	54	68	103	10
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
7	Jo Adell	R-R	6-3	215	4/8/99	LOS ANGELES AL	.207	130	405	54	84	20	62	35	126	15
51	Gustavo Campero	S-R	5-6	183	9/20/97	LOS ANGELES AL	.239	13	46	6	11	1	6	0	8	3
						Salt Lake (AAA)	.280	14	50	8	14	0	5	5	9	4
						Rocket City (AA)	.279	93	312	56	87	14	45	39	60	29
	Matthew Lugo	R-R	6-1	190	5/9/01	Salt Lake (AAA)	.400	1	5	2	2	1	3	0	0	0
						Worcester (AAA)	.250	35	124	21	31	5	19	12	38	7
						Portland (AA)	.315	43	146	27	46	11	35	20	36	9
8	Mickey Moniak	L-R	6-2	195	5/13/98	LOS ANGELES AL	.219	124	392	48	86	14	49	21	114	8
	Jorge Soler	R-R	6-4	235	2/25/92	SAN FRANCISCO	.240	93	341	57	82	12	40	44	97	1
						Sacramento (AAA)	.286	2	7	1	2	0	1	1	1	0
						ATLANTA	.243	49	152	27	37	9	24	24	44	0
27	Mike Trout	R-R	6-2	235	8/7/91	LOS ANGELES AL	.220	29	109	17	24	10	14	16	27	6
						Salt Lake (AAA)	.000	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
3	Taylor Ward	R-R	6-1	200	12/14/93	LOS ANGELES AL	.246	156	585	73	144	25	75	63	163	6



Seattle MARINERS

2025 PREDICTION

3RD

AL WEST

2024 FINISH: 2ND (85-77)

Back on Sept. 30, 2022, when Cal Raleigh smashed a walk-off homer at T-Mobile Park to send the Seattle Mariners back to the postseason for the first time since 2001, it seemed like better days and seasons were ahead for the franchise. The roster was young, the farm system was loaded and baseball in the Pacific Northwest was rejuvenated.

Instead, the Mariners missed qualifying for the postseason by the slimmest of margins the following two seasons. Can they find their way back in 2025? They will have to do it with roughly the same roster and will need bounce-back or breakout seasons from several position players and minimal regression from the starting rotation

ROTATION

Seattle's starting pitchers combined to lead MLB in ERA (3.38), innings pitched (942.2), quality starts (92), opponent batting average (.211), WHIP (1.03), strikeout-to-walk ratio (4.88), fewest walks-per-9 innings (1.77), fewest hits-per-9 innings (7.53), opponent on-base percentage (.266) and opponent OPS (.644). And much of that production can be attributed to the right-handed quintet of Luis Castillo, Logan Gilbert, George Kirby, Bryce Miller and Bryan Woo, who combined to make 149 of the 162 starts last season. The only other pitchers to make a start for Seattle were righthander Emerson Hancock (12) and lefty Jhonathan Díaz (1). While it might seem logical to trade one of the five, Jerry Dipoto, the president of baseball operations, has refused to weaken the strongest part of the team in any way, choosing to keep the unit together.

BULLPEN

Expected to be a strength in 2024, the unit was beset by injuries. Two key relievers — Matt Brash and Jackson Kowar — underwent season-ending elbow surgeries and never threw a pitch last season. Righthander Gregory Santos, who was acquired from the White Sox to be a late-inning leverage reliever, made just eight appearances after missing the first three months with a lat strain and then suffering a biceps issue. The hard-throwing Brash underwent an "internal brace" procedure, which could have him back in games by May 1. Kowar had Tommy John surgery and won't be back until midseason. The bullpen does return closer Andrés Muñoz, who pitched most of the season with lower-back issues. When healthy, Muñoz was overpowering, using a two-seam and a four-seam fastball that can touch triple digits along with a nasty slider. In years past, the Mariners had been able to resurrect the careers of castoff pitchers and turn them into valuable relievers. They didn't find much of that magic in 2024, although rookie Troy Taylor and Collin Snider did pitch valuable innings late in the season.

MIDDLE INFIELD

The day after his frustrating 2024 season ended, J.P. Crawford went back to work in the batting cages at Driveline Baseball. He wasn't going to accept a season in which he posted a .202/.304/.321 slash line with 102 strikeouts in



Julio Rodríguez

T-Mobile Park

Opened: 1999 • Capacity: 47,116
Left: 331' Center: 405' Right: 327'
Tickets: 206-346-4001
mlb.com/MARINERS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Highest single-season first-pitch strike rate, 2021-24

1. 2024 Mariners	65.5
2. 2024 Tigers	64.6
3. 2024 Twins	64.6
4. 2023 Mariners	64.5
5. 2024 Cardinals	64.3

451 plate appearances. An oblique strain on April 24 also hindered his production and caused him to miss 25 games, while a fractured hand on July 22 kept him out 31 games. The Mariners hope Crawford can get his plate production somewhere near his breakout 2023 season, when he posted 35 doubles, 19 homers, 94 runs scored, 65 RBIs and an AL-leading 94 walks. Seattle's ongoing attempt to fill second base will likely result in a platoon of right-handed-hitting Ryan Bliss and switch-hitter Leo Rivas. Both made their MLB debuts in 2024 with glimpses of solid play. Rivas is the more polished defender, while Bliss has more extra-base potential at the plate. Cole Young, a 2022 first-round pick, is expected to start the season at Triple-A Tacoma and could push for a roster spot.

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

RF	Victor Robles (R)
SS	J.P. Crawford (L)
CF	Julio Rodríguez (R)
C	Cal Raleigh (S)
LF	Randy Arozarena (R)
1B	Luke Raley (L)
DH	Mitch Garver (R)
3B	Dylan Moore (R)
2B	Ryan Bliss (R)

■ BENCH

OF	Mitch Haniger (R)
1B	Tyler Locklear (R)
OF	Dominic Canzone (L)
IF	Leo Rivas (S)

■ ROTATION

RHP	Luis Castillo
RHP	Logan Gilbert
RHP	George Kirby
RHP	Bryce Miller
RHP	Bryan Woo

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Andrés Muñoz (C)
RHP	Gregory Santos
RHP	Matt Brash
RHP	Collin Snider
RHP	Troy Taylor
RHP	Trent Thornton
LHP	Tayler Saucedo
LHP	Gabe Speier

CORNERS

The Mariners had hoped to address third base with an outside addition but will have to turn to veteran utility infielder Dylan Moore to fill the spot. Moore, who won the American League Gold Glove for utility players in 2024, is solid defensively, but getting everyday at-bats might be an issue. Ben Williamson, the Mariners' second-round pick in 2023, is an elite defender at third base and could be up by midseason if his hitting progresses. With veteran first baseman Carlos Santana turning down their multi-year contract to sign a one-year contract with the Guardians, the Mariners had to readjust their platoon plans with Luke Raley at first base. Tyler Locklear, who made his MLB debut in 2024 and had some success with a lot of strikeouts, will serve as the right-handed-hitting portion of the platoon.



Bryce Miller

OUTFIELD

When the Mariners acquired left fielder Randy Arozarena from the Rays at the trade deadline and agreed to a two-year contract extension with Victor Robles, they had their corner outfielders to flank center fielder Julio Rodríguez for 2025. Robles was an unexpected contributor. In need of outfield depth and improved defense, the Mariners took a flyer on the once-highly touted prospect, signing him to an MLB deal after the Nationals released him in late May. With some freedom to be himself and the opportunity to play every day, Robles flourished, posting a .328/.393/.467 slash line with 20 doubles and 34 stolen bases. Rodríguez got off to a slow start and never really got his season going until it was too late. He was also sidetracked by a high ankle sprain that kept him out 16 games. After Hall of Famer Edgar Martínez took over as hitting coach and simplified some things with Rodríguez, he posted a .313/.364/.537 slash line with nine homers and 30 RBIs in the final 34 games of the season.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE MARINERS "I can see the Mariners running away with the division this year if they get one more high-impact bat — because they just can't be as bad on offense as we saw last year. That was an outlier. You could get into and out of trouble pretty easily against them. But they seemed to respond to Edgar Martínez at the end of the year, and now they've got a great full-time hitting coach in Kevin Seitzer. I actually like their outfield a lot, with Julio Rodríguez, Randy Arozarena and Victor Robles, who dropped his hands, scrapped his leg kick and finally seemed to come into his own. The biggest thing, though, is that pitching staff. They're just never out of a game. All those guys are so deceptive, too — the ball is on guys before they know it. Logan Gilbert has such incredible extension, Bryce Miller and Bryan Woo have super-low-entry release points and George Kirby is just a paint-master. I would never trade any of those four — it's gonna pay off for them very soon, and I think this could be the year."

CATCHING

The Mariners arguably have the best catcher in baseball in Cal Raleigh. He was named the American League Gold Glove winner and the AL Platinum Glove winner after leading MLB in games caught (135), innings caught (1,122) and runners caught stealing (26). Since the latter stat has been tracked, only Raleigh, Jim Sundberg (1975-76) and Hall of Famer Gary Carter (1982-83) have led MLB in back-to-back seasons. At the plate, the switch-hitting Raleigh posted a .220/.312/.436 slash line with 16 doubles, 34 homers, 100 RBIs and 70 walks.

DH/BENCH

The Mariners signed Mitch Garver to a two-year, \$24 million contract prior to the 2024 season to serve as their full-time DH. But he started slowly and only got worse. Seattle started using him as a backup to Raleigh in hopes of getting his bat going. It didn't work. By the end of the season, Garver caught once a week and was in the lineup at DH only when a left-handed starter was on the mound. With utility players like Moore and Bliss possibly forced into everyday work, there is a lack of versatility on the bench. Rivas will have to fill that role.

MANAGEMENT

For the first time since 2015, the Mariners will start a season with a new manager. Scott Servais, who was the second-longest-tenured manager in franchise history, was fired on August 22. Dan Wilson, a former catcher and member of the organization's hall of fame, took over the job, posting a 21-13 record in the final 34 games. Wilson tried to bring a simplified approach and messaging to the Mariners' daily approach to winning games.

FINAL ANALYSIS

Despite needing serious improvement in their offense production, the Mariners made minimal additions. Their starting pitching remained intact and is good enough keep them competitive and in the wild-card race. But unless Rodríguez and Crawford return to their 2023 production levels and the bullpen can stay healthy, they will fall short of the postseason again.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

PAYROLL PROBLEMS The Mariners' lack of activity in the offseason was largely due to payroll budget limitations set by the ownership group. President of baseball operations Jerry Dipoto and general manager Justin Hollander had roughly \$15 million available for upgrading a roster that needed help at first base, second base, third base and in the bullpen. It made for a cold Hot Stove season in terms of transactions.

ROOT OF THEIR ISSUES Like many teams, the Mariners are dealing with issues surrounding the regional sports network that televises their games, in this case ROOT Sports NW. But unlike many teams, they are the principal owner of their network. While it might have been a financial benefit in the past, distribution issues, lack of live programming and climbing subscription rates have made the situation unsustainable. The Mariners will likely televise games on their own network for one more season before joining a handful of teams that will operate under MLB's production company.

OLD-SCHOOL APPROACH The Mariners will have two new hitting coaches this season. Former Braves hitting coach Kevin Seitzer and his assistant Bobby Magallanes have been hired to fill those roles on Dan Wilson's MLB staff. Edgar Martinez, who filled in as the interim hitting coach after Jarret DeHart was fired last season, didn't want to return to the rigors of a full-time hitting coach, having served in that role from 2015-18. Instead, he was named as the senior director of hitting strategy and will oversee the work done by the new hitting coaches and drive the overall philosophy of the organization. His focus will continue to be on the simple approach of using the whole field and making quality contact.

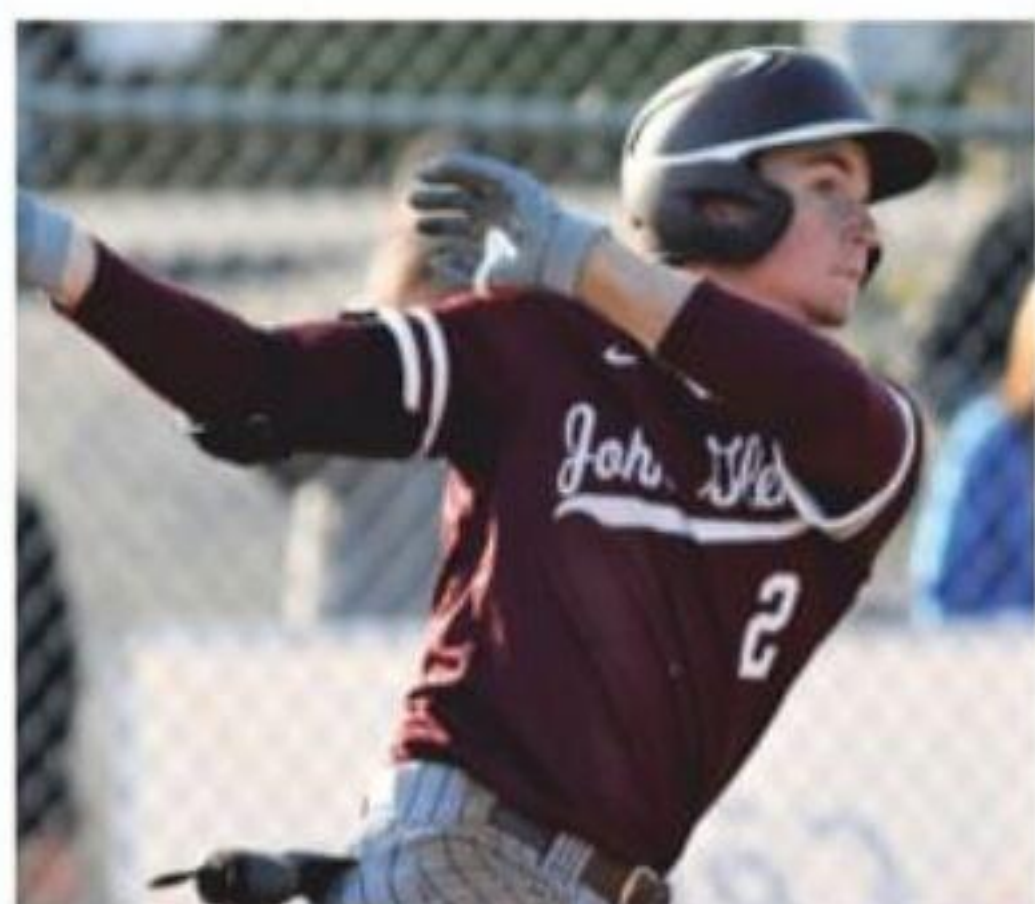
Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27	28	29
				A's	A's	A's
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
A's	DET	DET	DET		SF	SF
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
SF	HOU	HOU	HOU		TEX	TEX
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
TEX		CIN	CIN	CIN	TOR	TOR
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
TOR		BOS	BOS	BOS	MIA	MIA
27	28	29	30			
MIA		LAA	LAA			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
					TEX	TEX
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
TEX	A's	A's	A's		TOR	TOR
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
TOR	NYN	NYN	NYN		SD	SD
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
SD	CWS	CWS	CWS	HOU	HOU	HOU
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
HOU		WAS	WAS	WAS	MIN	MIN
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
MIN		BAL	BAL	BAL	LAA	LAA
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
LAA	ARI	ARI	ARI		CLE	CLE
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
CLE	BOS	BOS	BOS		CHC	CHC
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
CHC	MIN	MIN	MIN	MIN	TEX	TEX
29	30					
TEX	KC					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		KC	KC	KC	PIT	PIT
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
PIT		NYN	NYN	NYN	DET	DET
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
DET		ALL-STAR BREAK			HOU	HOU
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
HOU	MIL	MIL	MIL	LAA	LAA	LAA
27	28	29	30	31		
LAA	A's	A's	A's	TEX		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
					TEX	TEX
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
TEX		CWS	CWS	CWS	TB	TB
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
TB		BAL	BAL	BAL	NYM	NYM
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
NYM	PHI	PHI	PHI		A's	A's
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
A's	SD	SD	SD		CLE	CLE
31						
CLE						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	TB	TB	TB		ATL	ATL
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
ATL	STL	STL	STL	LAA	LAA	LAA
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
LAA		KC	KC	KC	HOU	HOU
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
HOU		COL	COL	COL	LAD	LAD
28	29	30				
LAD						

STATISTICIAN

92 The number of quality starts made by the rotation, the most in MLB. Seattle had a 61-31 record in those games.

1,625 Strikeouts by Mariners hitters, the most in baseball. They did manage to avoid topping the MLB record of 1,654 set by the 2023 Minnesota Twins.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Colt Emerson, SS (19)** Maturity and approach have him on developmental fast track.

■ **2. Cole Young, SS/2B (21)** With no full-time answers at second base, he could make his MLB debut in 2025.

■ **3. Lazaro Montes, OF (20)** Left-handed masher has drawn comparisons to Yordan Alvarez.

■ **4. Harry Ford, C (22)** Strong and athletic with an understanding of the strike zone.

■ **5. Felnin Celesten, SS (19)** An ultra-athletic switch-hitter with the skills to stay at shortstop.

■ **6. Jonny Farmelo, OF (20)** Speedster is expected to return at midseason from a knee injury.

■ **7. Jurrangelo Cijntje, P (21)** A switch-pitcher who brings a unique gift to the pitching depth.

■ **8. Michael Arroyo, IF (20)** Posted a .285/.400/.509 slash line in 120 games at both levels of A-ball.

■ **9. Logan Evans, RHP (23)** The most MLB-ready of the organization's starting pitching prospects.

■ **10. Tyler Locklear, 1B (24)** Needs to cut down on strikeouts, but the power potential is there.

Mariners Roster

Executive Vice President and General Manager: Justin Hollander • Manager: Dan Wilson • Coaches: Manny Acta (bench), Tony Arnerich (bullpen and catching instructor), Trent Blank (major league and director of pitching strategy), Louis Boyd (major league field coordinator), Danny Farquhar (asst. pitching and pitching strategist), Perry Hill (infield), Bobby Magallanes (asst. hitting), Edgar Martinez (senior director, hitting strategy), Kristopher Negrón (third base), Kevin Seitzer (hitting), Pete Woodworth (pitching), Eric Young Jr. (first base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
83	Eduard Bazardo	R-R	6-0	190	9/1/95	SEATTLE	2-0	4.88	23	0	0	27.2	20	9	33	
						Tacoma (AAA)	1-1	4.29	21	0	0	21.0	18	11	29	
67	Cody Bolton	R-R	6-2	210	6/19/98	SEATTLE	0-0	4.34	17	0	0	18.2	18	9	17	
						Tacoma (AAA)	1-2	3.07	33	0	2	29.1	25	12	34	
47	Matt Brash	R-R	6-1	173	5/12/98	INJURED — Missed Season										
	Blas Castano	R-R	5-10	162	9/8/98	Tacoma (AAA)	5-4	5.13	14	14	0	73.2	79	24	74	
						Arkansas (AA)	0-4	3.31	15	12	0	51.2	50	19	34	
58	Luis Castillo	R-R	6-2	200	12/12/92	SEATTLE	11-12	3.64	30	30	0	175.1	158	47	175	
74	Jhonathan Diaz	L-L	6-0	170	9/13/96	SEATTLE	0-1	4.66	5	1	0	9.2	14	3	8	
						Tacoma (AAA)	9-3	4.36	23	22	0	117.2	121	52	120	
36	Logan Gilbert	R-R	6-6	215	5/5/97	SEATTLE	9-12	3.23	33	33	0	208.2	148	37	220	
26	Emerson Hancock	R-R	6-4	213	5/31/99	SEATTLE	4-4	4.75	12	12	0	60.2	62	19	39	
						Tacoma (AAA)	7-3	3.43	17	17	0	94.1	85	37	66	
68	George Kirby	R-R	6-4	215	2/4/98	SEATTLE	14-11	3.53	33	33	0	191.0	181	23	179	
	Austin Kitchen	L-L	6-0	200	2/11/97	MIAMI	0-1	14.14	4	1	0	7.0	16	3	4	
						Jacksonville (AAA)	2-0	2.87	10	0	0	15.2	9	5	7	
						Tacoma (AAA)	1-1	14.73	4	0	0	3.2	9	2	2	
						Albuquerque (AAA)	3-0	3.65	18	0	0	24.2	25	6	18	
						Hartford (AA)	2-0	1.08	5	0	0	8.1	9	2	6	
37	Jackson Kowar	R-R	6-5	200	10/4/96	INJURED — Missed Season										
50	Bryce Miller	R-R	6-2	200	8/23/98	SEATTLE	12-8	2.94	31	31	0	180.1	131	45	171	
75	Andrés Muñoz	R-R	6-2	222	1/16/99	SEATTLE	3-7	2.12	60	0	22	59.1	31	26	77	
48	Gregory Santos	R-R	6-2	190	8/28/99	SEATTLE	0-1	4.91	8	0	0	7.1	7	1	6	
						Tacoma (AAA)	0-0	1.42	7	0	0	6.1	3	7	7	
						Everett (A+)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	0	1	
60	Tayler Saucedo	L-L	6-4	205	6/18/93	SEATTLE	2-0	3.49	53	0	3	38.2	35	18	38	
						Tacoma (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	0	1	
52	Collin Snider	R-R	6-4	195	10/10/95	SEATTLE	3-4	1.94	42	0	0	41.2	36	13	47	
						Tacoma (AAA)	0-1	3.44	17	1	0	18.1	23	8	22	
55	Gabe Speier	L-L	5-11	200	4/12/95	SEATTLE	0-2	5.70	29	0	0	23.2	19	14	33	
						Tacoma (AAA)	0-0	1.80	15	0	1	15.0	9	5	10	
						ACL Mariners (R)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	1.0	1	0	0	
59	Troy Taylor	R-R	6-0	205	9/9/01	SEATTLE	0-0	3.72	21	0	1	19.1	15	7	25	
						Arkansas (AA)	3-3	1.17	29	0	16	30.2	16	9	31	
						Everett (A+)	0-1	1.50	11	0	5	12.0	6	5	14	
46	Trent Thornton	R-R	6-0	190	9/30/93	SEATTLE	4-3	3.61	71	0	1	72.1	63	19	77	
54	Carlos Vargas	R-R	6-4	210	10/13/99	Tacoma (AAA)	2-5	3.54	55	0	2	53.1	58	18	40	
22	Bryan Woo	R-R	6-2	205	1/30/00	SEATTLE	9-3	2.89	22	22	0	121.1	96	13	101	
						Tacoma (AAA)	0-0	0.00	3	3	0	11.1	5	0	17	
						Everett (A+)	0-0	6.75	1	1	0	2.2	1	2	2	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
18	Mitch Garver	R-R	6-1	220	1/15/91	SEATTLE	.172	114	367	37	63	15	51	53	133	0
29	Cal Raleigh	S-R	6-3	235	11/26/96	SEATTLE	.220	153	546	73	120	34	100	70	176	6
	Nick Raposo	R-R	5-9	210	6/3/98	Memphis (AAA)	.193	58	192	21	37	7	28	15	45	0
						Buffalo (AAA)	.246	20	61	5	15	1	5	10	14	0
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
1	Ryan Bliss	R-R	5-7	165	12/13/99	SEATTLE	.222	33	63	10	14	2	9	5	22	5
						Tacoma (AAA)	.269	93	360	67	97	12	54	61	97	50
3	J.P. Crawford	L-R	6-2	202	1/11/95	SEATTLE	.202	105	392	55	79	9	37	52	102	5
						Tacoma (AAA)	.182	4	11	1	2	0	0	2	4	0
27	Tyler Locklear	R-R	6-2	210	11/24/00	SEATTLE	.156	16	45	3	7	2	3	3	20	1
						Tacoma (AAA)	.260	70	265	53	69	8	41	39	76	5
						Arkansas (AA)	.291	41	158	30	46	8	26	23	49	4
25	Dylan Moore	R-R	6-0	205	8/2/92	SEATTLE	.201	135	368	53	74	10	42	53	123	32
20	Luke Raley	L-R	6-4	235	9/19/94	SEATTLE	.243	137	404	58	98	22	58	27	135	11
76	Leo Rivas	S-R	5-8	150	10/10/97	SEATTLE	.233	43	73	10	17	0	8	10	24	3
						Tacoma (AAA)	.296	63	203	50	60	4	32	55	51	24
	Austin Shenton	L-R	6-0	205	1/22/98	TAMPA BAY	.214	19	42	3	9	1	3	8	14	0
						Durham (AAA)	.258	83	310	49	80	20	65	48	110	0
12	Samad Taylor	R-R	5-8	160	7/11/98	SEATTLE	.400	3	5	2	2	0	0	0	1	0
						Tacoma (AAA)	.262	136	508	93	133	11	75	68	156	50
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
56	Randy Arozarena	R-R	5-11	185	2/28/95	SEATTLE	.231	54	199	32	46	5	23	28	68	4
						TAMPA BAY	.211	100	350	45	74	15	37	45	101	16
8	Dominic Canzone	L-R	5-11	190	8/16/97	SEATTLE	.196	67	168	20	33	8	17	18	53	1
						Tacoma (AAA)	.287	29	115	19	33	7	22	12	24	2
17	Mitch Haniger	R-R	6-2	214	12/23/90	SEATTLE	.208	121	380	42	79	12	44	40	126	0
5	Cade Marlowe	L-R	6-0	210	6/24/97	SEATTLE	.250	8	8	1	2	0	0	1	1	0
						Tacoma (AAA)	.235	90	344	60	81	13	45	55	133	43
10	Victor Robles	R-R	6-0	193	5/19/97	SEATTLE	.328	77	229	41	75	4	26	16	44	30
						WASHINGTON	.120	14	25	3	3	0	2	5	9	4
						Rochester (AAA)	.350	6	20	4	7	0	3	3	6	1
44	Julio Rodríguez	R-R	6-3	228	12/29/00	SEATTLE	.273	143	567	76	155	20	68	38	156	24

Texas RANGERS

2025 PREDICTION

2ND

AL WEST

2024 FINISH: 3RD (78-84)

Figuring out what to expect from veteran starter Jacob deGrom is one reason why the Rangers' hopes of fielding a strong contender in 2025 are shrouded in mystery. The righthander is a two-time Cy Young Award winner who has posted a 2.41 ERA and 0.85 WHIP in two seasons with the Rangers while striking out 13.0 batters per nine innings. He is also 36 years old and has made just nine starts for the Rangers in those two seasons, which were wrapped around his recovery from Tommy John surgery. The Rangers expect him to be healthy in spring training. They also expect many of their core players from their 2023 World Series-winning team to be at full strength this spring. But many of those same players had their struggles in 2024. After a relatively low-key offseason, the team is counting heavily on internal improvements in their quest to assemble another championship-contending ball club.

"I've seen this offense be an elite offense," manager Bruce Bochy says. "Hope is not the strategy here. I know these guys will bounce back and be the players that we know they are."

ROTATION

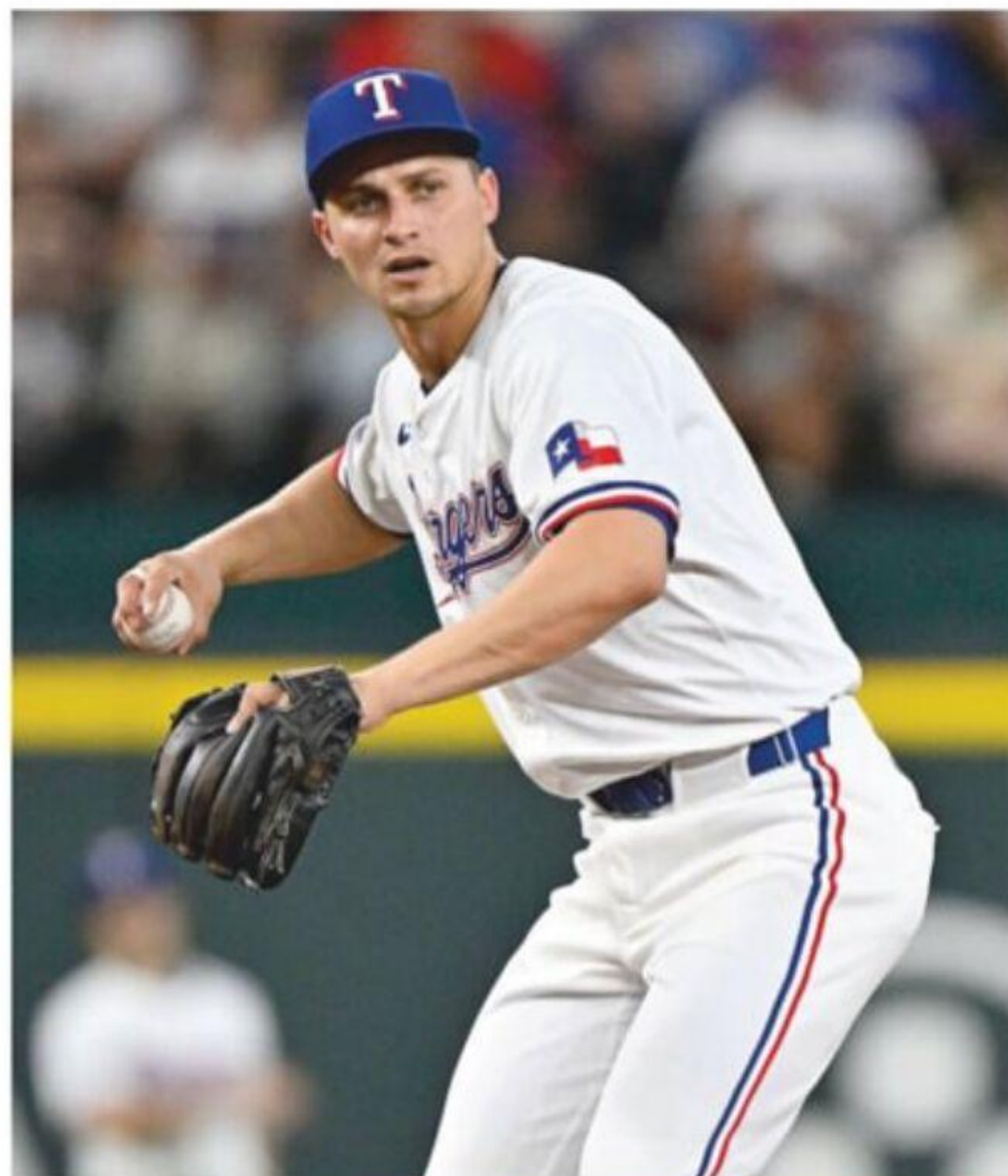
The Rangers' biggest move this winter was re-signing righthander Nathan Eovaldi. He and deGrom have the ability to form a formidable 1-2 combination at the top of the rotation. Veteran righthanders Tyler Mahle and Jon Gray and lefthander Cody Bradford are the leading candidates to fill out the rotation. Bradford was 6-3 with a 3.54 ERA in 14 outings last year, missing three and a half months because of a back injury. If Bradford is healthy, he could fit into the No. 3 spot. Gray enters the final season of his four-year contract with the Rangers; he's a tough competitor with heart, but injuries have limited him to an average of 24 starts and 129 innings per year. The mystery candidates in what could be a six-man rotation are righthanders Jack Leiter and Kumar Rocker. Leiter was the second overall pick in 2021, while Rocker was third overall in 2022. Now is the time for the former Vanderbilt teammates to prove worthy of their draft position.

BULLPEN

The Rangers bullpen was hit hard by free agency and is being rebuilt almost from the ground floor. Righthander Jacob Webb, signed as a free agent from the Orioles, is an early candidate to be the closer. Shawn Armstrong is a veteran right-handed setup reliever. Veteran Hoby Milner, another free-agent signing, and lefthander Robert Garcia, acquired in a trade from the Nationals, give them two experienced southpaws out of the pen. Righthander Dane Dunning could play a big role here after several years of mixed results as a starter.

MIDDLE INFIELD

All-Stars Marcus Semien and Corey Seager are the heart and soul of the Rangers as the undisputed team leaders and the team's two best players. One difference between the two: Semien has missed just four games over the past three seasons, while Seager has missed 93 because of injuries. Seager's 2024 season



Corey Seager

Globe Life Field

Opened: 2020 • Capacity: 40,300
Left: 329' Center: 407' Right: 326'
Tickets: 972-RANGERS
mlb.com/RANGERS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Highest percentage of swings on pitches in the strike zone in the American League (min. 500 PAs), 2022-24

1. 2023 Corey Seager, Rangers 85.5
2. 2022 Kyle Tucker, Astros 84.0
3. 2024 Corey Seager, Rangers 82.4
4. 2022 Corey Seager, Rangers 81.9
5. 2022 Ryan Mountcastle, Orioles 81.5

was cut short because of a sports hernia that required surgery. He is expected to be ready for spring training. Bochy has talked about giving Semien more time off.

CORNERS

The Rangers hoped for a breakthrough season from All-Star third baseman Josh Jung in 2024. Instead, he was limited to 46 games due to a right wrist fracture. Josh Smith stepped in with 13 home runs and 62 RBIs, winning the Silver Slugger Award for utility players. The third base job should be Jung's if he is healthy. First base appears to be the spot for big-swinging Jake Burger, who was acquired from the Marlins. He hit a combined 63 home runs the past two years, albeit with 299 strikeouts. A third baseman for most of his career, he has played 74

games (52 starts) at first and is the obvious candidate to replace Nathaniel Lowe, who was traded to the Nationals.

OUTFIELD

Right fielder Adolis García had a big drop in numbers last year, going from 39 home runs, 107 RBIs and a .508 slugging percentage to 25-85-.400. He needs to be more productive. The Rangers see Wyatt Langford as being on the verge of stardom going into his second season. The big question is center field. Leody Taveras has manned the spot for three seasons because of his defense, but his offense dropped off last year. Evan Carter, a postseason star in 2023, could push Taveras aside if he recovers from a back injury that limited him to 45 games last year.



Wyatt Langford

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

2B	Marcus Semien (R)
SS	Corey Seager (L)
LF	Wyatt Langford (R)
RF	Adolis García (R)
DH	Joc Pederson (L)
3B	Josh Jung (R)
1B	Jake Burger (R)
C	Jonah Heim (S)
CF	Leody Taveras (S)

■ BENCH

UTIL	Josh Smith (L)
C	Kyle Higashioka (R)
INF	Ezequiel Duran (R)
OF	Evan Carter (L)

■ ROTATION

RHP	Jacob deGrom
RHP	Nathan Eovaldi
LHP	Cody Bradford
RHP	Jon Gray
RHP	Tyler Mahle
RHP	Kumar Rocker

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Jacob Webb (C)
RHP	Dane Dunning
RHP	Shawn Armstrong
LHP	Holby Milner
LHP	Robert García
RHP	Jack Leiter
RHP	Chris Martin

CATCHING

Jonah Heim was a huge disappointment in 2024. He was an All-Star in 2023 with a 106 OPS+, but that fell to 72 last season, and his defense wasn't as strong either. So the Rangers signed eight-year veteran Kyle Higashioka to a two-year contract. Heim should still be considered the No. 1 catcher, but Higashioka gives them a solid option who could at least share some of the workload.

DH/BENCH

The Rangers' designated hitters combined for a .584 OPS last season, the lowest in the major leagues. So they signed left-handed swinging Joc Pederson to a

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE RANGERS "Bruce Bochy always won every other year with the Giants, so maybe the Rangers will catch their breath and get after it again. A lot of stuff went wrong last year, health-wise, with major regression from Adolis García and Jonah Heim, the fluky wrist injury to Josh Jung and Evan Carter's back problems. I loved what I saw from Wyatt Langford; he has elite bat speed and a good eye at the plate. He'll be a perennial All-Star, and I'd say he'll be their best player, too, but Corey Seager is a top-5 guy for me. He just rolls out of bed and hits. Marcus Semien is a great role model for that clubhouse, and Joc Pederson can re-create Nathaniel Lowe's production at the plate. The pitching here is boom-or-bust, so it's great that they kept Nathan Eovaldi as a stabilizer, with Jon Gray. Is Jacob deGrom ready for 30 ace-level starts? Can Jack Leiter improve his command and harness that great stuff? What kind of workload can they count on from Kumar Rocker? If they get the best-case scenario with all those guys, they could be dangerous. But it's more likely a middle-of-the-pack team."

two-year deal to be their DH. He slashed .275/.393/.515 with 23 home runs and 64 RBIs for the Diamondbacks. Smith, also a lefty, could get some DH time and has the ability to play multiple defensive positions.

MANAGEMENT

The leadership team is secure with Chris Young as president of baseball operations and Bochy having guided the Rangers to a World Series in 2023. Bochy turns 70 in April, so there is a question of how much longer he wants to do this before he awaits a call from the Hall of Fame. He is currently eighth with 2,171 wins all-time and will pass Dusty Baker (2,183) and Sparky Anderson (2,194) early this season. Bochy is signed through 2025, and there's little doubt it's up to him how long he'll be the Rangers manager. The Rangers hired Skip Schumaker as a senior advisor after he spent two years as manager of the Marlins. He could be the leading in-house candidate to follow Bochy. Ross Fenstermaker was promoted to general manager in November after 14 years of working his way up through the front office. He and Josh Boyd, vice president of scouting, will be Young's top lieutenants.

FINAL ANALYSIS

There is plenty of proven talent on this ballclub, enough to feel the Rangers will be a contender in the American League West. The World Series title in 2023 was not a mirage, but neither were the injuries and decline in production among key players in 2024. Pitching will be a challenge. It always is in Texas. Offensively, the Rangers lineup should be potent if healthy and performing at expected levels. "You can't go out and just start getting everybody or new guys at every position," Bochy says. "We have a very good core. We won a world championship with these guys. Some of them had down years. You know, the silver lining is that's hopefully motivating them even more."



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

SEMIEN DELIVERS Marcus Semien, his wife Tarah and their four children have taken the lead in providing food donations to needy families at the Rangers Youth Academy in Dallas. For eight straight Friday nights last summer, the Semien family delivered boxes of fresh produce and canned foods to athletes and their families at the Academy. Semien was selected as the 2024 winner of the Jim Sundberg Community Achievement Award.

WHICH JON GRAY? Righthander Jon Gray was 2-2 with a 2.17 ERA in his first 13 outings last season. He allowed two or fewer runs in 12 straight starts from April 6 to June 12, the second-longest such streak in Rangers history. But then he went 3-4 with an 8.03 ERA in his final 11 outings while dealing with a strained right groin and right foot injury. He had similar streaks both ways in 2022 and '23. The Rangers need consistency from him.

LOCAL BOY MAKES GOOD Reliever Hoby Milner was born in Dallas, played at R.L. Paschal High in Fort Worth and pitched three years for the University of Texas in Austin. His father, Brian, made the big leagues after being drafted in the seventh round as a catcher out of Fort Worth Southwest High. Hoby has pitched in 294 games over eight seasons with the Phillies, Rays, Angels and Brewers but admitted he has dealt with severe anxiety issues. He now works with a therapist and psychologist and made a video with the Brewers to talk about what he went through for many years before finally getting his anxiety under control.

LISTEN TO DAD Wyatt Langford was the worst player on his Little League team. The statistics, which the coaches posted in the dugout, proved it. His father, Michael, a farmer in central Florida with a strong work ethic, was tired of his son's bellyaching about his poor performance and offered to coach him. His son responded, ultimately becoming a first-round draft pick and potential All-Star outfielder for the Rangers.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27	28	29
				BOS	BOS	BOS
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
BOS	CIN	CIN	CIN		TB	TB
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
TB	CHC	CHC	CHC		SEA	SEA
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
SEA		LAA	LAA	LAA	LAD	LAD
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
LAD		A's	A's	A's	SF	SF
27	28	29	30			
SF	A's	A's	A's			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
				A's	SEA	SEA
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SEA		BOS	BOS	BOS	DET	DET
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
DET	COL	COL	COL	HOU	HOU	HOU
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
HOU		NYN	NYN	NYN	CWS	CWS
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
CWS	TOR	TOR	TOR		STL	STL
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
STL		TB	TB	TB	WAS	WAS
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
WAS		MIN	MIN	MIN	CWS	CWS
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
CWS		KC	KC	KC	PIT	PIT
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
PIT	BAL	BAL	BAL		SEA	SEA
29	30					
SEA	BAL					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		BAL	BAL		SD	SD
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
SD	LAA	LAA	LAA	LAA	HOU	HOU
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
HOU		ALL-STAR BREAK			DET	DET
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
DET	A's	A's	A's		ATL	ATL
27	28	29	30	31		
ATL	LAA	LAA	LAA	SEA		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
					SEA	SEA
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
SEA	NYN	NYN	NYN		PHI	PHI
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
PHI	ARI	ARI	ARI		TOR	TOR
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
TOR	KC	KC	KC	KC	CLE	CLE
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
CLE	LAA	LAA	LAA		A's	A's
31						
A's						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	ARI	ARI	ARI		HOU	HOU
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
HOU	MIL	MIL	MIL		NYM	NYM
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
NYM	HOU	HOU	HOU		MIA	MIA
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
MIA		MIN	MIN	MIN	CLE	CLE
28	29	30				
CLE						

STATISTICIAN

130 The number of errors committed by the Rangers in the past two seasons, the fewest in the AL. They set a club record last year with a 16-game errorless streak from July 23 to Aug. 10.

13 First-pitch home runs by Corey Seager, the most in the majors and tied for the second-most in team history. Seager swung at the first pitch 51.2 percent of the time, most among qualified hitters.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Sebastian Walcott, SS (19)** Possesses speed, power, instincts and feel for the game.

■ **2. Kumar Rocker, RHP (25)** In 36.2 minor-league innings, he struck out 55 and walked five.

■ **3. Alejandro Rosario, RHP (23)** Over 18 outings in A-ball, he had a 2.24 ERA and a 0.93 WHIP.

■ **4. Jack Leiter, RHP (24)** Elite stuff but still trying to find consistent command.

■ **5. Malcolm Moore, C (21)** Still needs to work on his defense to prove he is more than just a DH.

■ **6. Emiliano Teodo, RHP (24)** Has averaged 12.3 Ks and 5.0 walks per 9 IP in the minors.

■ **7. Justin Foscue, INF (26)** Slashed .276/.420/.477 at Triple-A last season.

■ **8. Winston Santos, RHP (22)** 95-plus mph fastball, swing-and-miss slider and good command.

■ **9. Dylan Dreiling, OF (21)** He struggled at High-A but has significant offensive potential.

■ **10. Paulino Santana, OF (18)** A possible five-tool player in the outfield with potential plus speed.

Rangers Roster

Executive Vice President & General Manager: Chris Young • Manager: Bruce Bochy • Coaches: Tony Beasley (third base), Dave Bush (asst. pitching), Seth Conner (asst. hitting), Donnie Ecker (offensive coordinator), Brett Hayes (quality control), Mike Maddux (pitching), Corey Ragsdale (first base), Jordan Tiegs (bullpen), Luis Urueta (bench), Justin Vele (asst. hitting), Bobby Wilson (catching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
43	Shawn Armstrong	R-R	6-2	225	9/11/90	TAMPA BAY	2-2	5.40	38	7	1	46.2	56	19	50	
						ST. LOUIS	1-0	2.84	11	0	0	12.2	11	2	12	
						CHICAGO (NL)	0-1	4.91	8	0	0	7.1	10	4	4	
61	Cody Bradford	L-L	6-4	197	2/22/98	TEXAS	6-3	3.54	14	13	0	76.1	64	13	70	
68	Marc Church	R-R	6-3	189	3/30/01	TEXAS	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	1	0	1	
						Round Rock (AAA)	1-1	3.22	17	0	1	22.1	20	7	24	
						Hickory (A+)	0-0	10.80	3	0	0	3.1	4	3	5	
87	Jose Corniell	R-R	6-3	165	6/22/03	INJURED — Missed Season										
	Luis Curvelo	R-R	6-1	170	10/21/00	Arkansas (AA)	4-0	2.57	49	0	3	66.2	39	18	78	
48	Jacob deGrom	L-R	6-4	180	6/19/88	TEXAS	0-0	1.69	3	3	0	10.2	11	1	14	
						Round Rock (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	2	0	4.2	1	1	7	
						Frisco (AA)	0-0	1.50	2	2	0	6.0	3	0	8	
33	Dane Dunning	R-R	6-4	225	12/20/94	TEXAS	5-7	5.31	26	15	0	95.0	97	40	91	
						Round Rock (AAA)	0-1	5.28	4	3	0	15.1	14	6	18	
						Frisco (AA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	2.0	1	0	0	
17	Nathan Eovaldi	R-R	6-2	217	2/13/90	TEXAS	12-8	3.80	29	29	0	170.2	147	42	166	
58	Gerson Garabito	R-R	6-0	160	8/19/95	TEXAS	0-2	4.78	18	2	0	26.1	23	12	22	
						Round Rock (AAA)	1-4	3.42	13	10	0	55.1	45	12	55	
						Frisco (AA)	0-0	2.08	1	1	0	4.1	3	2	7	
	Robert Garcia	R-L	6-4	236	6/14/96	WASHINGTON	3-6	4.22	72	0	0	59.2	55	16	75	
						Fredericksburg (A)	1-0	0.00	1	0	0	2.0	0	0	4	
22	Jon Gray	R-R	6-4	225	11/5/91	TEXAS	5-6	4.47	23	19	0	102.2	107	28	86	
67	Jacob Latz	R-L	6-2	185	4/8/96	TEXAS	2-3	3.71	46	0	0	43.2	39	27	40	
						Round Rock (AAA)	0-0	1.59	4	1	0	5.2	4	5	5	
						Frisco (AA)	2-0	12.46	4	0	0	4.1	6	4	8	
35	Jack Leiter	R-R	6-1	205	4/21/00	TEXAS	0-3	8.83	9	6	0	35.2	44	17	31	
						Round Rock (AAA)	6-4	3.51	17	16	0	77.0	62	35	110	
51	Tyler Mahle	R-R	6-3	210	9/29/94	TEXAS	0-1	4.97	3	3	0	12.2	14	4	10	
						Round Rock (AAA)	0-0	1.93	3	3	0	9.1	6	2	8	
						Frisco (AA)	0-0	4.50	2	2	0	6.0	4	1	5	
47	Chris Martin	R-R	6-8	224	6/2/86	BOSTON	3-1	3.45	45	0	2	44.1	47	3	50	
						Worcester (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	1	0	
	Hoby Milner	L-L	6-3	187	1/13/91	MILWAUKEE	5-1	4.73	61	1	1	64.2	63	14	64	
52	Walter Pennington	L-L	6-2	205	4/14/98	TEXAS	1-0	3.12	15	1	0	17.1	19	11	16	
						Round Rock (AAA)	1-0	0.00	2	0	0	3.2	4	1	3	
						KANSAS CITY	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	0.2	0	0	1	
						Omaha (AAA)	6-3	2.26	37	2	2	59.2	39	20	79	
57	Daniel Robert	L-R	6-4	210	8/30/94	TEXAS	1-0	3.18	4	0	0	5.2	6	2	6	
						Round Rock (AAA)	4-2	2.70	35	0	7	43.1	22	13	52	
80	Kumar Rocker	R-R	6-5	245	11/22/99	TEXAS	0-2	3.86	3	3	0	11.2	12	6	14	
						Round Rock (AAA)	0-0	1.80	2	2	0	10.0	4	1	18	
						Frisco (AA)	0-0	0.46	5	5	0	19.2	9	3	29	
						ACL Rangers (R)	0-1	6.43	3	2	0	7.0	11	1	8	
	Winston Santos	R-R	6-0	160	4/15/02	Frisco (AA)	5-3	4.89	10	10	0	46.0	39	14	57	
						Hickory (A+)	6-3	2.80	12	12	0	64.1	53	20	81	
66	Josh Sborz	R-R	6-3	215	12/17/93	TEXAS	2-2	3.86	17	0	0	16.1	16	4	17	
						Round Rock (AAA)	0-0	7.45	11	0	0	9.2	6	10	15	
	Emiliano Teodo	R-R	6-1	165	2/14/01	Frisco (AA)	5-4	1.98	20	19	0	86.1	53	50	110	
71	Jacob Webb	R-R	6-2	210	8/15/93	BALTIMORE	2-5	3.02	60	0	2	56.2	40	27	58	
43	Owen White	R-R	6-3	199	8/9/99	TEXAS	0-0	24.00	3	0	0	3.0	9	1	0	
						Round Rock (AAA)	2-8	5.64	29	15	1	99.0	107	48	87	
60	Cole Winn	R-R	6-2	190	11/25/99	TEXAS	0-1	7.79	13	0	0	17.1	18	4	14	
						Round Rock (AAA)	0-1	3.45	10	0	2	15.2	14	4	20	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
28	Jonah Heim	S-R	6-4	220	6/27/95	TEXAS	.220	131	459	45	101	13	59	26	90	1
11	Kyle Higashioka	R-R	6-1	202	4/20/90	SAN DIEGO	.220	84	246	29	54	17	45	15	74	2
55	Sam Huff	R-R	6-4	240	1/14/98	TEXAS	.000	3	3	0	0	0	0	1	2	0
						Round Rock (AAA)	.246	111	435	49	107	13	69	39	150	0
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
21	Jake Burger	R-R	6-2	230	4/10/96	MIAMI	.250	137	535	68	134	29	76	31	150	1
						Jacksonville (AAA)	.273	3	11	2	3	0	1	2	2	0
20	Ezequiel Duran	R-R	5-11	185	5/22/99	TEXAS	.246	92	268	26	66	3	20	14	63	1
						Round Rock (AAA)	.277	19	83	18	23	5	16	3	19	5
56	Justin Foscue	R-R	5-11	205	3/2/99	TEXAS	.048	15	42	3	2	0	1	2	18	0
						Round Rock (AAA)	.276	48	174	35	48	9	33	39	37	2
						ACL Rangers (R)	.412	6	17	2	7	1	3	4	2	1
6	Josh Jung	R-R	6-2	214	2/12/98	TEXAS	.264	46	178	19	47	7	16	8	48	4
						Round Rock (AAA)	.235	4	17	1	4	0	1	0	5	0
						Frisco (AA)	.400	3	10	1	4	0	2	0	4	0
21	Jonathan Ornelas	R-R	6-0	196	5/26/00	TEXAS	.216	18	37	1	8	0	3	2	13	0
						Round Rock (AAA)	.251	88	331	42	83	3	29	30	87	9
5	Corey Seager	L-R	6-4	215	4/27/94	TEXAS	.278	123	475	68	132	30	74	53	96	1
2	Marcus Semien	R-R	6-0	195	9/17/90	TEXAS	.237	159	650	101	154	23	74	64	105	8
8	Josh Smith	L-R	5-10	172	8/7/97	TEXAS	.258	149	523	67	135	13	62	46	121	11
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
32	Evan Carter	L-R	6-2	190	8/29/02	TEXAS	.188	45	144	23	27	5	15	15	43	2
53	Adolis Garcia	R-R	6-1	205	3/2/93	TEXAS	.224	154	580	68	130	25	85	45	177	11
38	Dustin Harris	L-R	6-2	185	7/8/99	TEXAS	.333	2	6	1	2	1	3	1	2	0
						Round Rock (AAA)	.272	131	486	81	132	10	53	61	123	35
36	Wyatt Langford	R-R	6-0	225	11/15/01	TEXAS	.253	134	499	74	126	16	74	51	115	19
						Round Rock (AAA)	.200	3	10	2	2	0	0	1	0	0
4	Joc Pederson	L-L	6-1	220	4/21/92	ARIZONA	.275	132	367	62	101	23	64	55	105	7
3	Leody Taveras	S-R	6-2	195	9/8/98	TEXAS	.229	151	480	59	110	12	44	42	112	23

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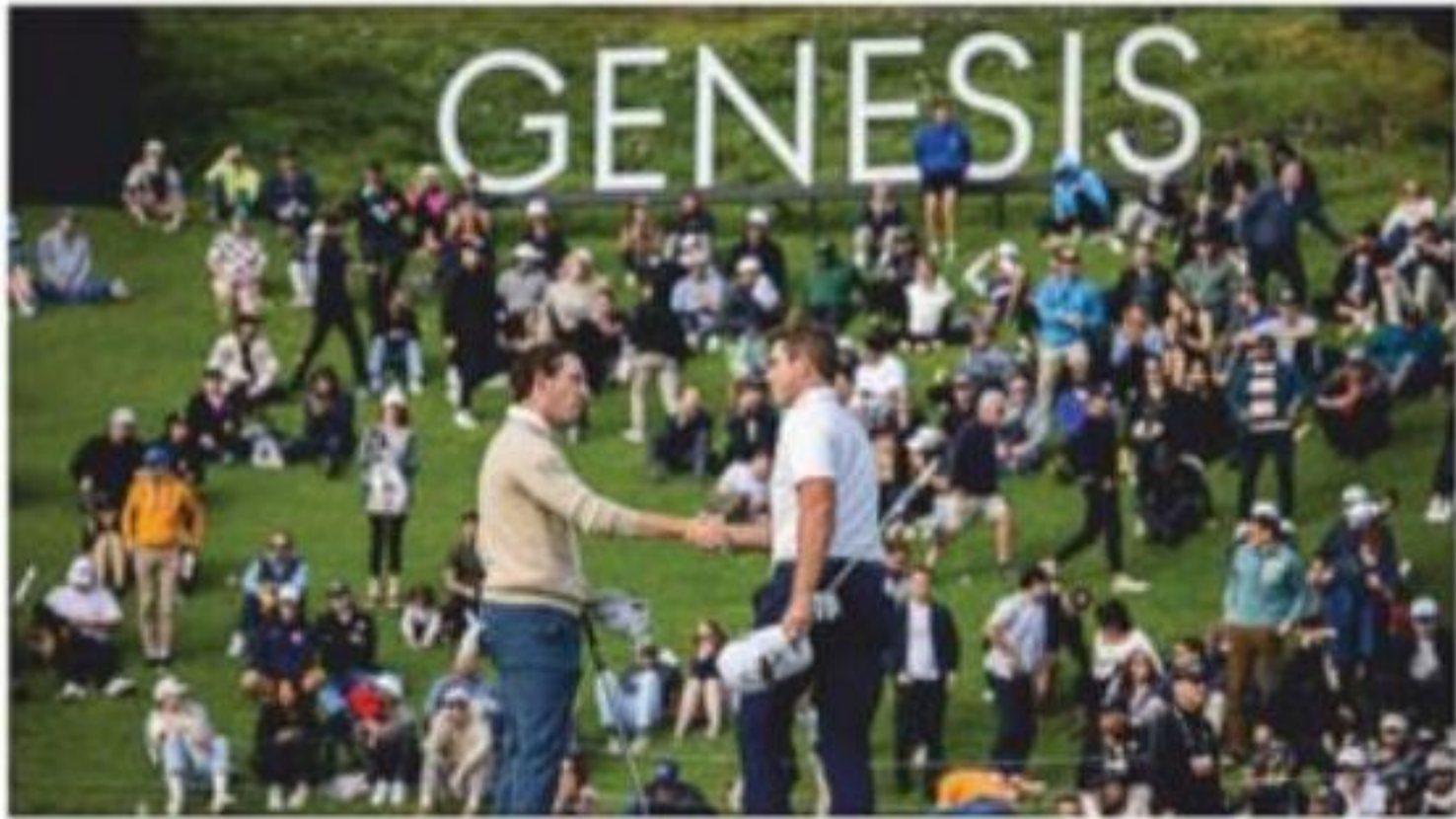


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AS

MORNING READ

NEWS LEADERBOARD GOLF ON THE SPIN ATHLONSports.COM NEWSLETTER



GENESIS

MR TOP STORIES

- Trevor Immelman as Chair of the OWGR is a Clear Conflict of Interest
- Putting forth my stance on issues, skipping the arguments and stress
- Hammer Time
- As TGL Debuts With a Laughter, the Jury is Still Out on the Concept
- LIV Golf Adds the Final Four Events for the 2025 Season
- Tiger Woods Gets \$10 Million in PIP Hijack
- A TGL Primer
- Hideki Matsuyama Masterful in Hawaii to Open 2025

OPINION

With Pacific Palisades Ablaze, It's Time to Move the Genesis

ALEX MICELI - JAN 9, 2025 6:54 PM EST

MR MORNING READ FEATURES



The Morning Read's Predictions for 2025



FedEx Finale Looking at Another Change



Why Reebok Came Back to Golf

MR MORNING READ NEWS



LIV Golf Adds the Final Four Events for the 2025 Season



A TGL Primer



Hideki Matsuyama Masterful in Hawaii to Open 2025



FedEx Finale Looking at Another Change



Why Reebok Came Back to Golf



DP World Tour Player Suspended for Betting on Golf



Matthew Gets Another Stint as GB&I Curtis Captain



New CEO Position Created at PGA Tour



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NATIONAL LEAGUE PREDICTIONS

NL EAST

1. PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES
2. ATLANTA BRAVES*
3. NEW YORK METS*
4. WASHINGTON NATIONALS
5. MIAMI MARLINS

NL CENTRAL

1. CHICAGO CUBS
2. MILWAUKEE BREWERS
3. CINCINNATI REDS
4. PITTSBURGH PIRATES
5. ST. LOUIS CARDINALS

NL WEST

1. LOS ANGELES DODGERS
2. SAN DIEGO PADRES*
3. ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS
4. SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS
5. COLORADO ROCKIES

*WILD CARD

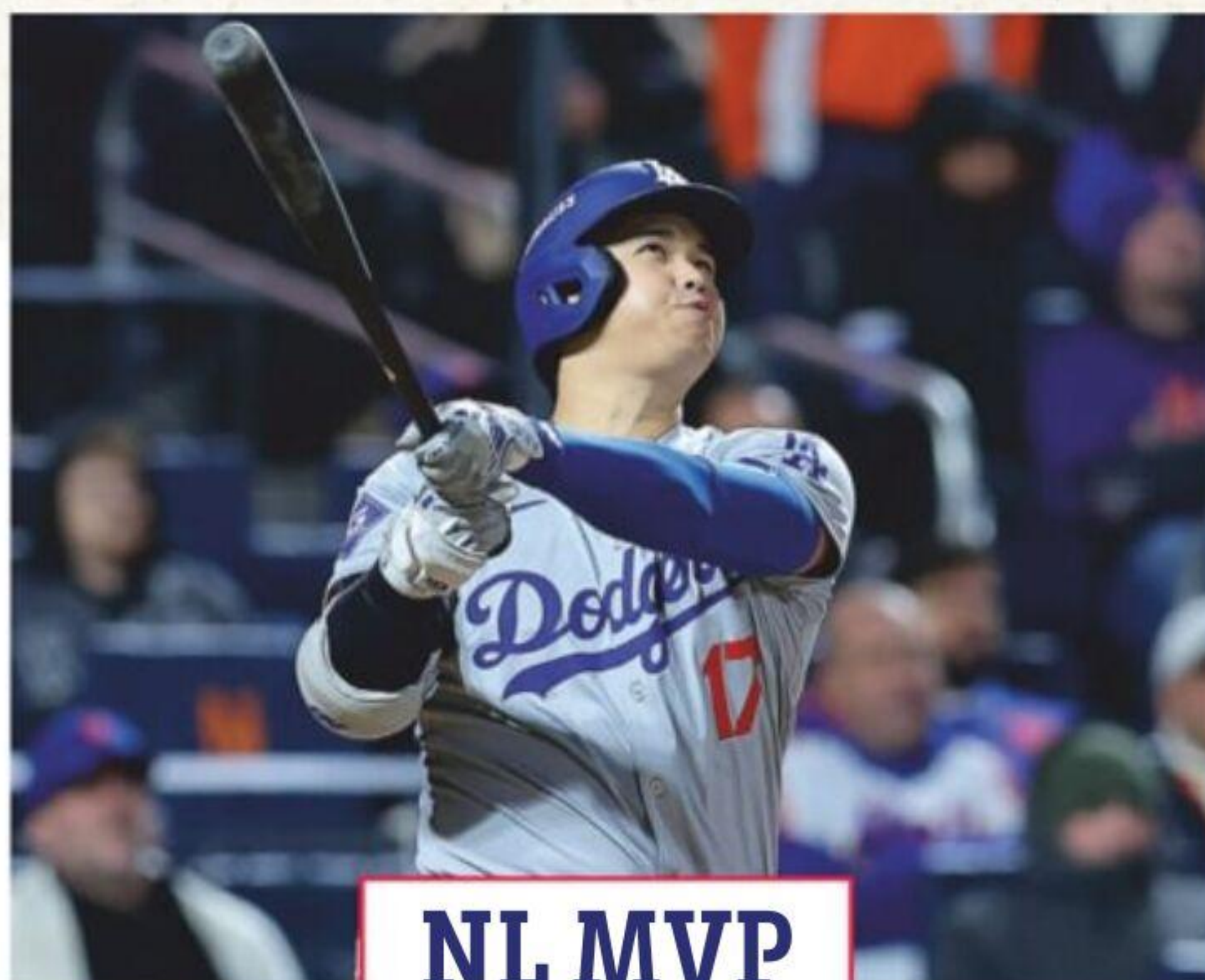
NLCS

DODGERS OVER PHILLIES



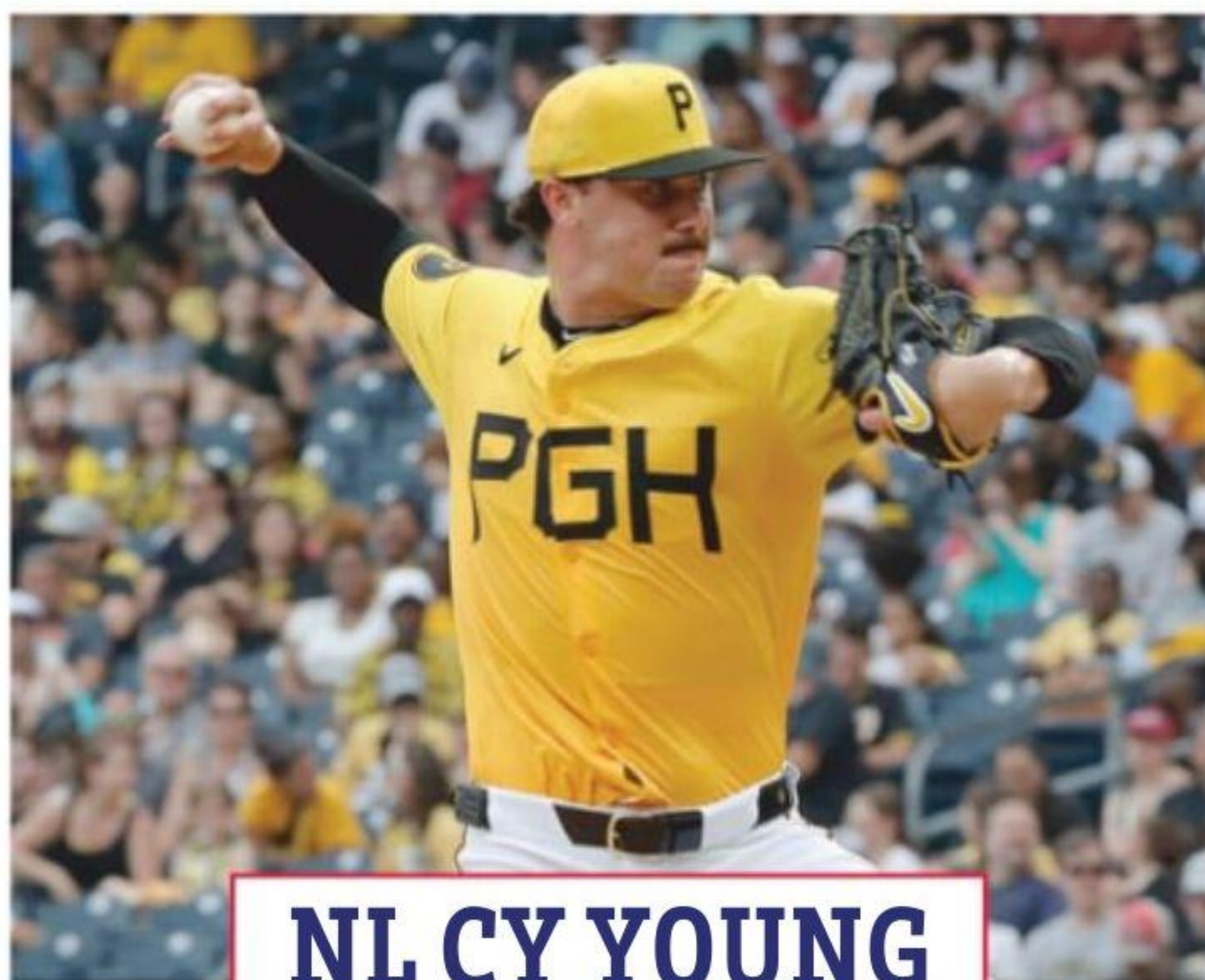
WORLD SERIES

DODGERS OVER YANKEES



NL MVP

1. SHOHEI OHTANI, DH/SP, LOS ANGELES DODGERS
2. JUAN SOTO, OF, NEW YORK METS
3. BRYCE HARPER, 1B, PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES
4. FERNANDO TATIS JR., OF, SAN DIEGO PADRES
5. MOOKIE BETTS, SS/OF, LOS ANGELES DODGERS



NL CY YOUNG

1. PAUL SKENES, RHP, PITTSBURGH PIRATES
2. ZACK WHEELER, RHP, PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES
3. CORBIN BURNES, RHP, ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS
4. HUNTER GREENE, RHP, CINCINNATI REDS
5. CHRIS SALE, LHP, ATLANTA BRAVES

NL ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

1. DYLAN CREWS, OF, WASHINGTON NATIONALS
2. MATT SHAW, 3B, CHICAGO CUBS
3. JORDAN LAWLAR, SS, ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS
4. RHETT LOWDER, RHP, CINCINNATI REDS
5. BUBBA CHANDLER, RHP, PITTSBURGH PIRATES

Atlanta BRAVES



2025 PREDICTION

2ND

NL EAST

2024 FINISH: 2ND (89-73)

Making the playoffs is the floor for the Atlanta Braves, who have reached the postseason seven straight seasons and 24 of the past 33 postseasons. They enter 2025 with the expectation of challenging for the NL East title with high-end options in the rotation and a lineup capable of reestablishing itself as one of the most feared in the NL. The Braves are rightfully among the leaders in the early odds to win the World Series.

ROTATION

The Braves will need to replace two mainstays from last year's five-man unit in Max Fried and Charlie Morton, who combined for 59 starts. But one major piece will return from injury. Spencer Strider is expected to miss most of April as he recovers from elbow surgery, but when he returns, the Braves are hoping he resumes his spot at the top of the rotation. In 2023, Strider finished fourth in the Cy Young voting after leading the majors in wins (20) and strikeouts (281). He only made two starts in 2024 before elbow surgery cost him the season. Lefty Chris Sale exceeded all expectations in his first season in Atlanta last year, winning the club's first Cy Young since 1998. Sale won the NL pitcher's Triple Crown with 18 wins, 225 strikeouts and a 2.38 ERA. The Braves were very careful with Sale, giving him at least five days rest for 22 of his 29 starts. Still, he suffered back spasms in the season's final two weeks and missed the postseason. Spencer Schwellenbach was another pleasant surprise as a rookie last season. The righthander made 21 starts and will be a full-time member of the rotation in his second season. The Braves hit on another offseason gamble last year, signing Reynaldo López and making him a starter for the first time since 2021. López was an All-Star and had a 2.00 ERA in 25 starts. Grant Holmes (seven starts as a 28-year-old-rookie) and Ian Anderson (missed 2022 and 2023 due to Tommy John surgery) are options at the back end of the rotation.

BULLPEN

Closer Raisel Iglesias, 35, enters the final year of his contract coming off the best year of his career. Iglesias was 6-2 with 34 saves and held opponents to career-bests in batting average (.160) and on-base percentage (.211) while striking out 68 in 69.1 innings. He was as dominant as any closer in the National League. The set-up role in front of Iglesias remains unsettled with Joe Jiménez potentially out for all of 2025 following knee surgery and A.J. Minter a free agent after eight years with the Braves. Pierce Johnson is the leading candidate for the role after going 6-6 with a 3.67 ERA in 58 games. Dylan Lee, Aaron Bummer and Daysbel Hernández are also expected to get significant action, and Holmes is an option if he does not stick in the rotation.

MIDDLE INFIELD

For the third straight season, the middle infield combo manager Brian Snitker will send out on a daily basis will be Ozzie Albies at second base and Orlan-



Ronald Acuña Jr.

Truist Park

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Tickets: 404-577-9100
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5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Highest single-season
hard-hit rate, 2021-24

1. 2023 Braves	45.8
2. 2022 Blue Jays	44.0
3. 2022 Braves	43.4
4. 2024 Braves	42.5
5. 2021 Red Sox	42.4

do Arcia at shortstop. Albies is a three-time All-Star who enters his ninth season with the Braves but is coming off his second season in three years in which he missed significant time with injury and finished with a sub-100 OPS+. In 2024, Albies broke his wrist on July 21 and missed two months, but even before the injury, his production had slipped. The Braves are hoping Albies can rediscover his form from 2021 and 2023 when he collected at least 30 home runs and 100 RBIs both seasons. Arcia saw his numbers regress in 2024 to his career norms after his breakout All-Star season in 2023. He has 17 home runs in each of his past two seasons, but his .271 on-base percentage will keep him near the bottom of the lineup. He brings value as a plus defender with outstanding range and a strong arm.

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

RF	Ronald Acuña Jr. (R)
CF	Michael Harris II (L)
3B	Austin Riley (R)
DH	Marcell Ozuna (R)
1B	Matt Olson (L)
2B	Ozzie Albies (S)
C	Sean Murphy (R)
LF	Jarred Kelenic (L)
SS	Orlando Arcia (R)

■ BENCH

C	Chadwick Tromp (R)
OF	Eli White (R)
INF	Nacho Alvarez Jr. (R)
OF	Bryan De La Cruz (R)

■ ROTATION

RHP	Spencer Strider
LHP	Chris Sale
RHP	Spencer Schwellenbach
RHP	Reynaldo López
RHP	Grant Holmes

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Raisel Iglesias (C)
RHP	Pierce Johnson
LHP	Aaron Bummer
RHP	Ian Anderson
LHP	Dylan Lee
RHP	Daysbel Hernández
RHP	Allan Winans
RHP	Connor Gillespie

CORNERS

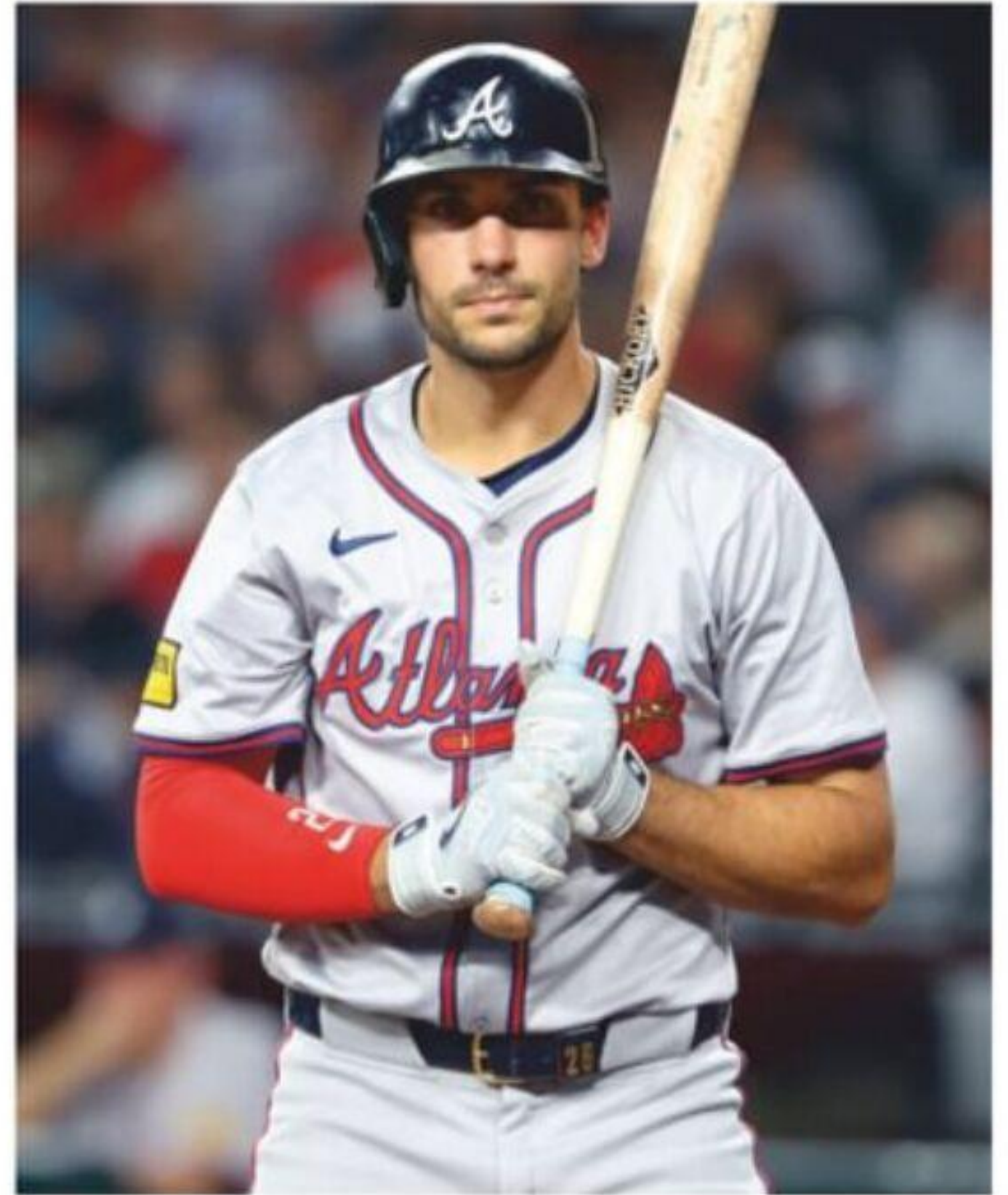
First baseman Matt Olson and third baseman Austin Riley are two of the most durable players in MLB. Olson has missed just six games in the past five years (all in 2021), and prior to suffering a fractured hand last August that ended his 2024 season, Riley had started in 588 of his past 610 games. Both Olson and Riley saw their 2024 numbers decline from 2023 levels, with Olson's home runs dropping to 29 from 54 and Riley seeing his OPS+ fall from 130 to 115, but there is no reason at this point to believe that either player is entering any sort of decline.

OUTFIELD

Right fielder Ronald Acuña Jr. is not due to be back leading off for the Braves until the middle of May as he recovers from a torn ACL in his left knee in May 2024.

Acuña tore the ACL in

his right knee in July 2021, missing the rest of that season as the Braves went on to win the World Series. Acuña had a .764 OPS in the season after his first ACL repair, so it might not be reasonable to expect him to regain his 2023 MVP-level production (41 home runs and 73 stolen bases) when he returns to the lineup in May. Prior to his injury in 2024, he was already struggling with a career-low .250 batting average and only four home runs in 49 games. Still, he is the Braves' most talented player. Center field will be manned by Michael Harris II, a plus defender who can be streaky at the plate. Harris may lead off in Acuña's absence to start the year, something he did 48 times last year with a .321 on-base percentage. Left field could be a platoon situation, with Jarred Kelenic handling right-handed pitchers and Bryan De La Cruz facing lefties.



Matt Olson

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE BRAVES "Marcell Ozuna really carried them last season because everyone else in the lineup was a disappointment. Ronald Acuña Jr. is great, but he can't stay on the field — and the only time they won was when he was out. I love Michael Harris II in center; great range, great attitude. They need help in left field; Jarred Kelenic had a good two months, but he got exposed pretty easily and wasn't able to make the adjustment. Their infielders all backed up a little last year, but Austin Riley and Matt Olson are stars, and Ozzie Albies is still really good at second. Orlando Arcia took a big step back, but I still think he's a quality everyday player. They gave all that money to Sean Murphy, but last year was a disaster for him, and they're gonna really miss Travis d'Arnaud. Their rotation took a big hit in losing Max Fried, but with Chris Sale, Reynaldo López and Spencer Schwellenbach, there's still a lot to like, and Spencer Strider should be back at some point. AJ Smith-Shawver has a great arm, but he tips all his pitches. Their bullpen is pretty strong, but the Joe Jiménez knee injury really cuts into their depth."

CATCHING

The Braves effectively time-shared the position last season with Travis d’Arnaud and Sean Murphy, but d’Arnaud departed in the offseason, leaving Murphy the opportunity to play the majority of the games. After an All-Star season in 2023, Murphy suffered an oblique injury on Opening Day and missed nearly the first two months of 2024. He never quite regained his footing, hitting a career-low .193 with a 76 OPS+. The Braves hope he can recapture his 2022-23 form.

DH/BENCH

DH Marcell Ozuna enters the final year of his contract with the Braves coming off two outstanding seasons. He was the Braves’ top hitter during an All-Star season that saw him belt 39 home runs and drive in 104 runs in 162 games. Ozuna was a critical piece of the Braves making the postseason as the team’s other stars saw a decline in productivity. Chadwick Tromp projects as the back-up catcher after serving as the No. 3 the past two seasons. Eli White is a candidate for a fourth outfield spot after hitting .282 in 35 games last season, and free agent Whit Merrifield was a surprise bright spot filling in for Albies when he was hurt last season. The Braves could bring him back as a reserve infielder.

MANAGEMENT

Snitker has guided the Braves to seven straight playoff appearances. He won the World Series in 2021 and the NL East from 2018-23 before finishing second last season despite significant injuries up and down the roster. He enters his 10th year at age 69 with the only question being when he may retire.

FINAL ANALYSIS

If the Braves can at least tread water for the first 50 games, they figure to get quite a boost when potentially their best pitcher and hitter return in Strider and Acuña. Counting on Sale to replicate his Cy Young season is dicey, but he should still be elite, and Olson, Riley and Albies are due for bounce-back seasons. An eighth straight playoff appearance should be the minimum expectation.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

ALL-STARs, TAKE 2 The MLB All-Star game, and the accompanying festivities that now include the MLB Draft, will return to Atlanta after the 2021 game was taken away and moved to Denver. MLB made the decision in response to what were viewed by some to be restrictive voting laws in the state that were passed by the legislature and signed into law by Governor Brian Kemp. The laws are still in place and appear to have had little effect on voter turnout in the state. This will be the third All-Star game hosted by the Braves in their third park. In 1972, Hank Aaron hit a home run for the National League in Atlanta Stadium (later Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium). In 2000, Derek Jeter was the MVP for the AL at Turner Field.

COMING HOME The Braves made a change at hitting coach after taking a big step back from its 2023 production. Tim Hyers replaces Kevin Seitzer, who was with the Braves for 10 years. Hyers went to Newton High School outside of Atlanta before being drafted by the Blue Jays. He has nine years of coaching experience with the Red Sox, Dodgers and Rangers and won a World Series with the Red Sox and Rangers.

PITCHING SHORTAGE By the time the Braves clinched a playoff spot by winning the backend of a doubleheader the Monday after the regular season, their pitching staff was spent. Chris Sale was lost to back spasms, Reynaldo López and Charlie Morton had started over the weekend and Max Fried was needed for Game 2. The Braves had to open the playoffs with rookie AJ Smith-Shawver, whose May 23 start was his only appearance at the major league level in 2024. He lasted just 1.1 innings, giving up three runs as the Braves lost Game 1 4-0 to the Padres and were ultimately swept in two games.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27	28	29
				SD	SD	SD
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
SD	LAD	LAD	LAD		MIA	MIA
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
MIA		PHI	PHI	PHI	TB	TB
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
TB	TOR	TOR	TOR		MIN	MIN
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
MIN	STL	STL	STL		ARI	ARI
27	28	29	30			
ARI	COL	COL	COL			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
					LAD	LAD
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
LAD	CIN	CIN	CIN	CIN	PIT	PIT
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
PIT	WAS	WAS	WAS	WAS	BOS	BOS
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
BOS		WAS	WAS	WAS	SD	SD
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
SD		PHI	PHI	PHI	BOS	BOS
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
BOS		ARI	ARI	ARI	SF	SF
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
SF	MIL	MIL	MIL		COL	COL
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
COL		NYM	NYM	NYM	MIA	MIA
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
MIA	NYM	NYM	NYM	NYM	PHI	PHI
29	30					
PHI						
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		LAA	LAA	LAA	BAL	BAL
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BAL		A's	A's	A's	STL	STL
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
STL		ALL-STAR BREAK			NYN	NYN
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
NYN	SF	SF	SF		TEX	TEX
27	28	29	30	31		
TEX	KC	KC	KC	CIN		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
					CIN	CIN
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	MIL	MIL	MIL	MIA	MIA	MIA
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
MIA		NYM	NYM	NYM	CLE	CLE
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
CLE	CWS	CWS	CWS		NYM	NYM
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
NYM	MIA	MIA	MIA	PHI	PHI	PHI
31						
PHI						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	CHC	CHC	CHC		SEA	SEA
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
SEA	CHC	CHC	CHC		HOU	HOU
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
HOU	WAS	WAS	WAS		DET	DET
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
DET	WAS	WAS	WAS		PIT	PIT
28	29	30				
PIT						

STATISTICIAN

38 Consecutive batters retired by Raisel Iglesias from July 27 to August 23. His streak ended when he hit the Nationals’ Jacob Young with a pitch.

100 Atlanta’s team OPS+ (exactly the league average), one year after having the highest team OPS+ since at least 2000 at 126.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Cam Caminiti, LHP (18)**
Cousin of Ken was the Braves’ first-round pick in 2024.

- **2. AJ Smith-Shawver, RHP (22)** High school QB has a strong fastball and effective change.
- **3. Hurston Waldrep, RHP (23)** Waldrep has strong velocity and a consistent splitter.
- **4. Nacho Alvarez Jr., SS (21)** Has a high walk rate and low strike-out rate, though he lacks power.
- **5. Drake Baldwin, C (23)** Has a disciplined plate approach and above-average arm.
- **6. Owen Murphy, RHP (21)** If he fully recovers from Tommy John, projects as a mid-rotation starter.
- **7. JR Ritchie, RHP (21)** He has a potential four-pitch mix, highlighted by a mid-80s slider.
- **8. Jose Perdomo, SS (18)** An aggressive hitter who can hit to all fields.
- **9. Drue Hackenburg, RHP (22)** The brother of former NFL QB Christian, Drue looks like an innings-eating option.
- **10. Cade Kuehler, RHP (22)** Kuehler held a 3.74 ERA in 12 starts at Low-A and High-A.

Braves Roster

President, Baseball Operations and General Manager: Alex Anthopoulos • Manager: Brian Snitker • Coaches: Erick Abreu (bullpen), Tom Goodwin (first base), Tim Hyers (hitting), Chipper Jones (hitting consultant), Rick Kranitz (pitching), Carlos Mendez (asst. hitting), Eddie Pérez (major league), Hugh Quattlebaum (asst. hitting), Matt Tuiasosopo (third base), Walt Weiss (bench/infield)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
48	Ian Anderson	R-R	6-3	170	5/2/98	Gwinnett (AAA)	3-2	3.96	10	10	0	52.1	48	27	53	
						Rome (A+)	0-0	4.15	1	1	0	4.1	6	0	2	
						Augusta (A)	0-0	0.00	2	2	0	6.1	1	2	6	
						FCL Braves (R)	0-0	1.80	2	2	0	5.0	3	0	7	
49	Aaron Bummer	L-L	6-3	215	9/21/93	ATLANTA	4-3	3.58	56	0	0	55.1	61	18	69	
	Davis Daniel	R-R	6-1	190	6/11/97	LOS ANGELES AL	1-4	6.23	6	6	0	30.1	39	6	28	
						Salt Lake (AAA)	9-7	5.42	22	21	0	118.0	139	34	122	
46	Dylan Dodd	L-L	6-2	210	6/6/98	ATLANTA	0-0	9.00	1	0	0	2.0	4	1	2	
						Gwinnett (AAA)	2-7	5.35	25	20	1	107.2	131	32	98	
55	Bryce Elder	R-R	6-2	220	5/19/99	ATLANTA	2-5	6.52	10	10	0	49.2	64	17	46	
	Connor Gillispie	R-R	5-11	185	11/10/97	Gwinnett (AAA)	10-6	3.73	17	17	0	101.1	92	40	102	
						CLEVELAND	0-0	2.25	3	0	0	8.0	4	5	8	
						Columbus (AAA)	5-7	4.05	27	15	0	113.1	92	48	119	
Domingo Gonzalez	R-R	6-0	185	9/27/99	Gwinnett (AAA)	3-2	3.41	24	1	2	29.0	18	13	45		
					Mississippi (AA)	1-1	2.28	21	0	7	23.2	10	9	38		
62	Daysbel Hernández	R-R	5-10	220	9/15/96	ATLANTA	3-0	2.50	16	0	0	18.0	10	10	26	
						Gwinnett (AAA)	4-2	2.59	33	0	3	41.2	35	25	52	
66	Grant Holmes	L-R	6-0	226	3/22/96	ATLANTA	2-1	3.56	26	7	0	68.1	66	15	70	
						Gwinnett (AAA)	3-2	2.63	18	3	4	41.0	34	14	51	
26	Raisel Iglesias	R-R	6-2	190	1/4/90	ATLANTA	6-2	1.95	66	0	34	69.1	38	13	68	
77	Joe Jiménez	R-R	6-3	277	1/17/95	ATLANTA	1-5	2.62	69	0	3	68.2	45	23	82	
38	Pierce Johnson	R-R	6-2	202	5/10/91	ATLANTA	6-6	3.67	58	0	2	56.1	48	25	67	
52	Dylan Lee	L-L	6-3	214	8/1/94	ATLANTA	4-2	2.11	52	0	0	59.2	49	17	76	
						Gwinnett (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	3.0	1	0	4	
40	Reynaldo López	R-R	6-1	225	1/4/94	ATLANTA	8-5	1.99	26	25	0	135.2	108	42	148	
						Gwinnett (AAA)	0-0	6.75	1	1	0	4.0	6	1	4	
	Rolddy Munoz	R-R	6-2	183	4/14/00	Mississippi (AA)	2-2	3.98	31	1	3	40.2	34	18	56	
						Rome (A+)	1-1	5.23	7	0	1	10.1	7	4	19	
Angel Perdomo	L-L	6-8	265	5/7/94	INJURED — Missed Season											
Anderson Pilar	R-R	6-2	210	3/2/98	Jacksonville (AAA)	0-0	3.00	8	2	0	15.0	11	7	22		
					Pensacola (AA)	0-1	3.34	23	0	1	32.1	32	5	31		
					Beloit (A+)	1-0	0.00	6	0	0	10.2	3	1	18		
51	Chris Sale	L-L	6-6	180	3/30/89	ATLANTA	18-3	2.38	29	29	0	177.2	141	39	225	
56	Spencer Schwellenbach	R-R	6-1	200	5/31/00	ATLANTA	8-7	3.35	21	21	0	123.2	106	23	127	
						Mississippi (AA)	2-0	0.00	2	2	0	13.0	5	1	17	
						Rome (A+)	2-1	2.53	6	6	0	32.0	26	9	34	
32	AJ Smith-Shawver	R-R	6-3	205	11/20/02	ATLANTA	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	4.1	3	2	4	
						Gwinnett (AAA)	3-7	4.86	20	20	0	87.0	69	40	104	
						Rome (A+)	0-1	4.50	1	1	0	2.0	1	0	4	
99	Spencer Strider	R-R	6-0	195	10/28/98	ATLANTA	0-0	7.00	2	2	0	9.0	10	5	12	
30	Hurston Waldrep	R-R	6-2	210	3/1/02	ATLANTA	0-1	16.71	2	2	0	7.0	9	8	3	
						Gwinnett (AAA)	2-2	3.38	8	8	0	40.0	34	24	43	
						Mississippi (AA)	3-4	2.92	9	9	0	49.1	52	17	48	
						Augusta (A)	0-1	18.00	1	1	0	2.0	5	2	4	
						FCL Braves (R)	0-0	4.50	1	1	0	2.0	2	2	2	
72	Allan Winans	R-R	6-2	165	8/10/95	ATLANTA	0-2	15.26	2	2	0	7.2	14	4	4	
						Gwinnett (AAA)	7-5	3.30	24	16	0	114.2	103	31	100	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
12	Sean Murphy	R-R	6-3	228	10/4/94	ATLANTA	.193	72	233	19	45	10	25	27	67	0
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.278	4	18	4	5	2	4	1	4	0
45	Chadwick Tromp	R-R	5-8	221	3/21/95	ATLANTA	.250	19	52	3	13	0	6	1	17	0
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.303	60	234	32	71	7	48	29	48	0
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
1	Ozzie Albies	S-R	5-8	165	1/7/97	ATLANTA	.251	99	399	52	100	10	53	27	65	8
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.500	2	8	1	4	1	3	1	0	0
80	Nick Allen	R-R	5-8	166	10/8/98	OAKLAND	.175	41	97	6	17	1	4	5	20	0
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.345	81	322	64	111	7	51	49	41	16
17	Nacho Alvarez Jr.	R-R	5-11	190	4/11/03	ATLANTA	.100	8	30	1	3	0	0	0	10	0
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.297	64	246	47	73	10	42	37	45	10
						Mississippi (AA)	.265	48	170	18	45	0	15	29	38	16
11	Orlando Arcia	R-R	6-0	187	8/4/94	ATLANTA	.218	157	551	50	120	17	46	41	128	2
						Christian Cairo	R-R	5-9	185	6/11/01	Columbus (AAA)	.233	69	210	34	49
Akron (AA)	.252	39	131	14	33						2	9	19	38	14	
28	Matt Olson	L-R	6-5	225	3/29/94	ATLANTA	.247	162	600	78	148	29	98	71	170	0
27	Austin Riley	R-R	6-3	240	4/2/97	ATLANTA	.256	110	425	63	109	19	56	37	118	0
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
13	Ronald Acuña Jr.	R-R	6-0	205	12/18/97	ATLANTA	.250	49	192	38	48	4	15	27	53	16
14	Bryan De La Cruz	R-R	6-2	175	12/16/96	MIAMI	.245	105	424	44	104	18	51	25	118	3
						PITTSBURGH	.200	44	160	17	32	3	17	4	52	2
23	Michael Harris II	L-L	6-0	195	3/7/01	ATLANTA	.264	110	440	58	116	16	48	23	94	10
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.435	6	23	2	10	1	2	3	3	0
24	Jarred Kelenic	L-L	6-1	206	7/16/99	ATLANTA	.231	131	412	49	95	15	45	32	133	7
20	Marcell Ozuna	R-R	6-1	225	11/12/90	ATLANTA	.302	162	606	96	183	39	104	74	170	1
						Nashville (AAA)	.245	31	110	12	27	0	10	17	11	2
						Biloxi (AA)	.298	84	326	53	97	4	42	42	41	15
36	Eli White	R-R	6-2	195	6/26/94	ATLANTA	.282	35	39	9	11	1	4	1	12	3
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.294	78	293	56	86	8	40	38	76	24
						FCL Braves (R)	.000	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
65	Luke Williams	R-R	6-1	186	8/9/96	ATLANTA	.196	37	46	8	9	0	4	4	13	3
						Gwinnett (AAA)	.282	55	216	30	61	9	40	21	62	18



Miami MARLINS

2025 PREDICTION
5TH
 NL EAST
 2024 FINISH: 5TH (62-100)

The Marlins have undergone quite the makeover since Peter Bendix took over as president of baseball operations in November 2023. The transitional period continues into 2025 with a new front office and coaching staff after a 100-loss season marred by injuries and turnover. Bendix swung eight trades leading up to the 2024 trade deadline and moved Jesús Luzardo and Jake Burger to revamp what had been one of baseball's weakest farm systems. This upcoming season will focus on figuring out which prospects can be counted on as building blocks to execute Bendix's vision of sustainable success.

ROTATION

Sandy Alcantara is expected to start on Opening Day in his return from Tommy John surgery, and Eury Pérez is slated to be back around the All-Star break from the same procedure, but Braxton Garrett is out for the 2025 season with a left elbow UCL revision surgery with an internal brace. Before missing significant time with a left index finger strain, Ryan Weathers was having an All-Star-worthy first half (3.55 ERA). The wild card on the staff is Edward Cabrera, whose frontline stuff has made him a breakout candidate for manager Clayton McCullough. Others in the fold include Max Meyer, Valente Bellozo and prospects Adam Mazur and Robby Snelling.



Sandy Alcantara

BULLPEN

Less-heralded arms Calvin Faucher (142 ERA+) and Jesus Tinoco (226 ERA+) thrived in late-inning opportunities after the trade deadline. Over the course of the season, Anthony Bender regained his pre-Tommy John surgery form (111 ERA+), and Declan Cronin turned into a reliable middle-innings reliever (0.1 HR/9). The next step is getting southpaw Andrew Nardi (90 ERA+) back to being his dominant self in a division with so many powerful left-handed bats.

MIDDLE INFIELD

The Marlins are eager to see what Xavier Edwards can do over a full season after he didn't make his 2024 debut until early June because of a left foot infection. Despite appearing in just 70 games, he tied for seventh in the National League in steals (31) and would've won the batting title had he qualified (.328 average). Once Miami designated veteran Tim Anderson for assignment, Edwards started every day at shortstop — a position he hadn't played on a regular basis since his first professional season in 2018 at Low-A — and ranked fourth-worst in Outs Above Average and tied for tied for 11th-worst in Defensive Runs Saved despite only playing 590 innings.. The Marlins are optimistic the rangy Edwards will improve with an offseason of work. His double-play partner is likely to be Otto Lopez, who went from an early-season waiver claim two years removed from his last MLB callup to one of the majors' top defensive second basemen (9 DRS, 17 OAA). His bat (87 OPS+) will need to improve if he wants to continue being the everyday second baseman.

loanDepot Park

Opened: 2012 • Capacity: 37,442
 Left: 344' Center: 400' Right: 335'
 Tickets: 305-480-2525
mlb.com/MARLINS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Lowest single-season launch angle, 2023-24

1. 2024 Marlins	9.7
2. 2023 Marlins	10.2
3. 2023 White Sox	10.7
4. 2024 Nationals	10.7
5. 2023 Diamondbacks	10.8

CORNERS

Connor Norby and Jonah Bride experienced growing pains at new positions — third base and first base, respectively — down the stretch but project as Miami's starters entering the 2025 season. Norby, who was acquired as a top prospect in the Trevor Rogers trade with Baltimore, tabulated a .760 OPS and sprayed the ball to all parts of the field in 36 games for the Marlins. Bride, who was traded to Miami from Oakland for cash ahead of 2023 spring training, flourished in his first shot as an MLB regular (.833 OPS as a starter). His production likely made Bendix confident enough to move Burger in a Winter Meetings deal.

OUTFIELD

The Marlins lack gamechangers in this group, so they will likely play

favorable matchups depending upon the pitcher. Center field options include right-handed-hitting Dane Myers and Derek Hill, plus left-handed-hitting prospect Victor Mesa Jr., who would've made his MLB debut in 2024 had he not sustained a season-ending back injury in late July. Kyle Stowers, also acquired in the Rogers trade, and Griffin Conine could make up the corner outfielders. Both hit from the left side.

CATCHING

Nick Fortes is the incumbent, coming off a season in which he posted five Defensive Runs Saved and improved at the plate with a .737 second-half OPS. The backup spot is up for grabs between Rule 5 Draft selection Liam Hicks and minor league journeyman Jhonny

Pereda. Hicks converted to the position less than two years ago and has not played above the Double-A level, but Miami liked his plate discipline enough to take a shot. The 25-year-old will get every opportunity to make the club and receive playing time.

DH/BENCH

Somehow Jesús Sánchez is the longest-tenured position player on the Marlins. Since it is often an adventure with him in the outfield (-2 DRS in 2024), Sánchez would be better suited for the designated hitter role and allow the others to man spacious loanDepot park. Assuming Miami mixes and matches, bench options will include right-handed-hitting newcomer Eric Wagaman, left-hand-



Xavier Edwards

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

SS	Xavier Edwards (S)
3B	Connor Norby (R)
1B	Jonah Bride (R)
DH	Jesús Sánchez (L)
2B	Otto Lopez (R)
RF	Griffin Conine (L)
CF	Dane Myers (R)
LF	Kyle Stowers (L)
C	Nick Fortes (R)

■ BENCH

C	Liam Hicks (L)
OF	Derek Hill (R)
UTIL	Eric Wagaman (R)
1B	Matt Mervis (L)

■ ROTATION

RHP	Sandy Alcantara
LHP	Ryan Weathers
RHP	Edward Cabrera
RHP	Max Meyer
RHP	Valente Bellozo

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Calvin Faucher (C)
RHP	Jesus Tinoco
LHP	Andrew Nardi
RHP	Declan Cronin
RHP	Anthony Bender
LHP	Anthony Veneziano
RHP	Lake Bachar
RHP	Xzavion Curry

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE MARLINS "They're a mess. Everybody knows they're gonna stink, so there's lots of job security for their front office and zero pressure. Their pitching is OK, but there's almost nobody else I like. If Sandy Alcantara comes back, he's a legit top-of-the-rotation guy, and Edward Cabrera has a big arm. I do like Xavier Edwards; he's a throwback. He has a good at-bat every time from both sides of the plate. A couple of years ago, he was trying to sell out for power, but now he's back to working the count and just being a really good hitter. He's got a good feel for the barrel. He doesn't have the arm to play shortstop, so he'll have to move over to second, but he's their best position player. Connor Norby and Kyle Stowers have a chance to be good players, but nothing special; Baltimore did a good job over-selling those guys. Deyvison De Los Santos, who they got for A.J. Puk, might hit you 25 home runs in a half a season, and then you'd never see him again. He has no approach at the plate, won't cut his swing down and he has no interest in playing defense. Nick Fortes is decent behind the plate, but he can't hit."

ed-hitting Matt Mervis and whatever outfielder isn't starting that game. Mervis is a former top prospect who could be a change-of-scenery candidate.

MANAGEMENT

First-time big-league manager McCullough knows what he is getting himself into by taking over this young ball club: an emphasis on player development. He, Bendix and the rest of the organization continue to preach the idea of innovation in order to see growth within. Though McCullough hasn't managed at any level since 2014, his work as the Dodgers first-base coach was credited for Shohei Ohtani's 50-50 season. He also received high praise from superstar Mookie Betts. Reflecting an emphasis on analytics, Miami hired Brian Chase as vice president of baseball systems and Ryan Plunkett as vice president of baseball solutions. Chase's role consists of leading the baseball systems group (data engineering, machine learning engineering, software engineering and software development) to drive the development of technical infrastructure supporting research and development and the wider baseball operations group. Plunkett will oversee all aspects of the newly created baseball solutions team within the Marlins' research and development department. The group will be tasked with developing tools and applications for player evaluation and development to allow for a seamless connection between research and development and the entire Marlins organization.

FINAL ANALYSIS

It's clear that Bendix's vision won't happen overnight, especially when considering the high payrolls of the Mets, Phillies and Braves within the NL East. Success in the 2025 season will be determined by whether the Marlins find cornerstones from their deadline haul.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

THE BIGGER PICTURE The Marlins hired Joe Migliaccio (director of hitting) and Bill Hezel (director of pitching) and elevated Maxx Garrett (director of catching) as part of their baseball operations leadership structure. Each role requires the director to come up with a philosophy for his area of responsibility, teach it to the hired coaches and streamline it across every level of the organization — from the Dominican Summer League to the majors.

FRESH FACES Joining manager Clayton McCullough's coaching staff are bench coach Carson Vitale (previously with the Mariners), hitting coach Pedro Guerrero (Giants), assistant hitting coach Derek Shomon (Twins), pitching coach Daniel Moskos (Cubs) and assistant pitching coach Alon Leichman (Reds). All but Shomon and Leichman are new to the position they were hired for by the Marlins. Everyone except McCullough, 45, is under 40 years old.

LA CULTURA The 2025 season will bring back limited-edition jerseys as part of the Heritage Celebration Series presented by T-Mobile. Ticket packages will contain jerseys designed by local artists for the Venezuelan Heritage Celebration (April 12 vs. Nationals), Cuban Heritage Celebration (May 17 vs. Rays), Dominican Republic Heritage Celebration (Aug. 23 vs. Blue Jays) and Puerto Rican Heritage Celebration (Sept. 13 vs. Tigers). Each Saturday home game will also feature a postgame concert related to that day's heritage celebration.

NEXT GENERATION Even though the Marlins entered the draft lottery tied with the Rockies for the highest odds at picking No. 1, they fell to No. 7. The only other time the franchise chose seventh was in 2016, when Miami selected Alabama prep lefthander Braxton Garrett.

ON THE MIC With broadcaster Paul Severino not returning, the Marlins will have a new play-by-play voice for the first time since 2018. Games will air in the local market on FanDuel Sports Network, previously known as Bally Sports.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					27 PIT	28 PIT
						29 PIT
30 PIT	31 NYM	1 NYM	2 NYM	3	4 ATL	5 ATL
6 ATL	7 NYM	8 NYM	9 NYM	10	11 WAS	12 WAS
13 WAS	14	15 ARI	16 ARI	17 ARI	18 PHI	19 PHI
20 PHI	21 CIN	22 CIN	23 CIN	24	25 SEA	26 SEA
27 SEA	28 LAD	29 LAD	30 LAD			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 A's	2 A's
						3 A's
4 A's	5 LAD	6 LAD	7 LAD	8	9 CWS	10 CWS
11 CWS	12 CHC	13 CHC	14 CHC	15	16 TB	17 TB
18 TB	19 CHC	20 CHC	21 CHC	22	23 LAA	24 LAA
25 LAA	26 SD	27 SD	28 SD	29	30 SF	31 SF
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 SF	2 COL	3 COL	4 COL	5	6 TB	7 TB
8 TB	9 PIT	10 PIT	11 PIT	12	13 WAS	14 WAS
15 WAS	16 PHI	17 PHI	18 PHI	19 PHI	20 ATL	21 ATL
22 ATL	23	24 SF	25 SF	26 SF	27 ARI	28 ARI
29 ARI	30					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 MIN	2 MIN	3 MIN	4 MIL	5 MIL
6 MIL	7 CIN	8 CIN	9 CIN	10 CIN	11 BAL	12 BAL
13 BAL	14	15	16	17	18 KC	19 KC
20 KC	21 SD	22 SD	23 SD	24	25 MIL	26 MIL
27 MIL	28 STL	29 STL	30 STL	31		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 NYY	2 NYY
3 NYY	4 HOU	5 HOU	6 HOU	7 ATL	8 ATL	9 ATL
10 ATL	11	12 CLE	13 CLE	14 CLE	15 BOS	16 BOS
17 BOS	18 STL	19 STL	20 STL	21	22 TOR	23 TOR
24 TOR	25 ATL	26 ATL	27 ATL	28 NYM	29 NYM	30 NYM
31 NYM						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 WAS	2 WAS	3 WAS	4	5 PHI	6 PHI
7 PHI	8 WAS	9 WAS	10 WAS	11 WAS	12 DET	13 DET
14 DET	15	16 COL	17 COL	18 COL	19 TEX	20 TEX
21 TEX	22	23 PHI	24 PHI	25 PHI	26 NYM	27 NYM
28 NYM	29	30				



New York METS

2025 PREDICTION

3RD

NL EAST

2024 FINISH: 3RD (89-73)

The Mets expect to win the World Series. If that mandate seemed a bit hazy for a year or two, it's not anymore. After a slow start, the Mets raced through the summer, rolled through two playoff rounds and pushed the Dodgers to six games in the NLCS. Then they signed Juan Soto to the richest contract in sports history. The boundless payroll and ambition of superfan owner Steve Cohen are just what the fans want, but the path to a parade is never easy. The Mets face strong competition in the NL, and their pitching staff will need to improve to survive it.

ROTATION

The Mets got 94 starts out of Sean Manaea, Luis Severino and Jose Quintana last season before all became free agents. They effectively filled those spots by bringing back the resurgent Manaea for three years and \$75 million and adding Frankie Montas from Milwaukee (two years, \$34 million with a player opt-out after 2025) and Clay Holmes from the Yankees (three years, \$38 million with a player opt-out after 2026). Manaea reinvented himself on the fly last season by mimicking Chris Sale's low arm slot. Montas is a popular clubhouse guy but has been injured or below average since his strong 2021 season for the A's. The Mets love his stuff, however, and believe they can help his command. Holmes is an extreme ground-ball pitcher with an elite sinker and two kinds of sliders, so he should have the repertoire to start — but he's never topped 70 innings. Lefty David Peterson had a breakthrough season in 2024, going 10-3 with a 2.90 ERA and providing stellar work in October. The Mets hope that Kodai Senga — an All-Star as a rookie in 2023 — has overcome the shoulder and calf injuries that limited him to one start before his three playoff appearances. Paul Blackburn, a former All-Star himself, should return after missing the end of last season with a spinal leak in his back. Tylor Megill worked out of the bullpen in the playoffs but will probably start if a spot becomes available, with Griffin Canning another option as rotation insurance.

BULLPEN

The Mets' relievers had a 4.03 bullpen ERA last season, the highest of any NL playoff team, and the bullpen doesn't look much sturdier now. Closer Edwin Díaz had a shaky return in his first year back from knee surgery, with seven blown saves in 27 chances, though he was mostly outstanding in October and remains a strikeout machine when he's on. Reed Garrett anchors his setup crew, with José Buttó a solid option in any relief role, or as a spot starter. Lefty Danny Young held lefthanders to a .207 average and no home runs in 58 at-bats.

MIDDLE INFIELD

As he enters his fifth season as a Met, Francisco Lindor has been everything Cohen could have wanted. He's compiled 18.5 bWAR over the last three seasons, trailing only Aaron Judge, Mookie Betts, Shohei Ohtani and new teammate Soto. He found a home in the leadoff spot last season and had his

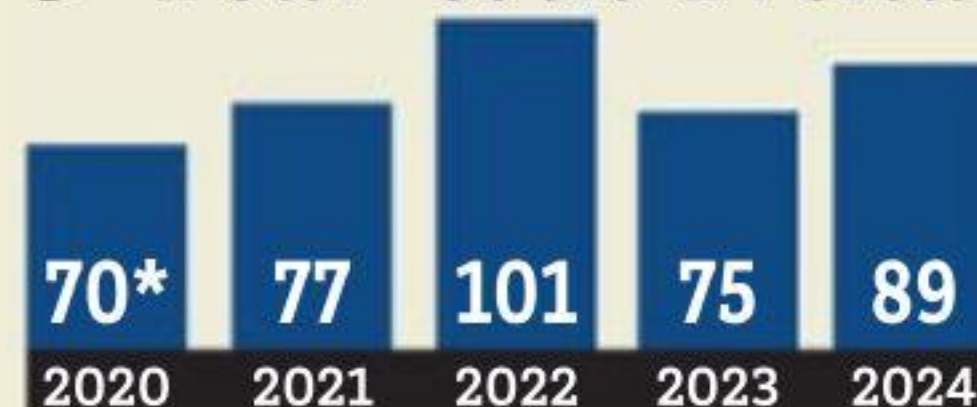


Francisco Lindor

Citi Field

Opened: 2009 • Capacity: 41,922
Left: 335' Center: 408' Right: 330'
Tickets: 718-507-TIXX
mlb.com/METS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Highest single-season bullpen
strikeout rate, 2022-24

1. 2022 Astros	28.3
2. 2024 Mets	27.7
3. 2022 Mets	27.6
4. 2022 Braves	27.3
5. 2022 Dodgers	26.7

JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA-IMAGN IMAGES

best year in New York, with clutch moments at the plate and nightly excellence at shortstop. Lindor's double-play partner, Jeff McNeil, had a frustrating season, struggling to a .216 average in the first half before finding his form in the second — only to break his wrist in early September, sidelining him until the NLCS. If McNeil, a former batting champ, rediscovers his post-All-Star break form, though, the Mets will be thrilled: He hit .289 with a .923 OPS in 41 games before the injury.

CORNERS

Mark Vientos established himself as a force in the middle of the lineup, with 27 homers and an .837 OPS in the regular season. Then he excelled in the playoffs, going deep five more times while batting .327 and driving in 14 runs in 13 games. He

also offers the versatility to continue playing his primary position of third base or switching to first, where he's made nine MLB starts and 66 starts in the minors. With Pete Alonso unsigned at press time, Vientos could slide over to a new position and open up third for Brett Baty, who won the Opening Day job there in 2024 but was banished to the minors by June. Baty — who is 25, like Vientos — has struggled in parts of three seasons with the Mets (.215/.282/.325), but he's a left-handed bat whose age and minor-league numbers suggest there's still potential.

OUTFIELD

Soto is considered average at best on defense, but he often made runners pay for testing his arm, with an MLB-leading nine outfield assists last season. He's also led his league in putouts five times, so he moves well in the field. In any case, the Mets invested mainly in Soto's power and plate discipline, the qualities that have him on a Hall of Fame track. The Mets have outstanding defensive options in center with Jose Siri and Tyrone Taylor, but while Siri has some power, both have a career on-base percentage below .300. That's rarely been a problem for Brandon Nimmo, the energetic left fielder who has a .371 career OBP despite posting a career-low .327 last season. Even so, he swung a productive bat with 23 homers and a career-high 90 RBIs.



Brandon Nimmo

PROJECTED LINEUP

LINEUP

SS	Francisco Lindor (S)
LF	Brandon Nimmo (L)
RF	Juan Soto (L)
1B	Mark Vientos (R)
DH	Starling Marte (R)
C	Francisco Alvarez (R)
2B	Jeff McNeil (L)
CF	Tyrone Taylor (R)
3B	Brett Baty (L)

BENCH

C	Luis Torrens (R)
SS	Luisangel Acuña (R)
CF	Jose Siri (R)
IF	Luis De Los Santos (R)
OF	José Azocar (R)

ROTATION

RHP	Kodai Senga
LHP	Sean Manaea
LHP	David Peterson
RHP	Frankie Montas
RHP	Clay Holmes

BULLPEN

RHP	Edwin Díaz (C)
RHP	José Buttó
RHP	Tylor Megill
RHP	Griffin Canning
RHP	Dylan Covey
RHP	Reed Garrett
RHP	Dedniel Núñez
LHP	Danny Young

CATCHING

Francisco Alvarez improves his batting average every year, so he's getting closer and closer to fulfilling the boast on his throat tattoo, which says simply: "The Best." While Alvarez's power declined in 2024, he has a powerful build, at 5-foot-10 and a muscular 223 pounds. He excelled on defense, tying for eighth in the majors in Statcast's catcher framing runs category, and he turned 23 in

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE METS "The Mets are definitely on the upswing, and Carlos Mendoza had them playing together really well last year. Everybody knows what a great hitter Juan Soto is, but what I also love is the standard he sets for everybody else in terms of how to take an at-bat. Nobody does it like him, but Brandon Nimmo has a great approach, too. He had a down year, but he's not gonna swing at bad pitches, he's willing to go the opposite way and he'll turn on a ball every once in a while. Francisco Lindor is the leader, does everything you could want. Mark Vientos' power is real, and Francisco Alvarez has absolutely no fear, although he can't lay off the off-speed stuff — he'll swing at it when it's halfway to the plate. I'm glad they brought back Sean Manaea, but I don't love the Frankie Montas signing; I'm always a little leery of guys who had a rough experience in New York already, like he did with the Yankees. Edwin Díaz slipped a little last year; from game to game, you didn't know what you were going to get. But they'll have a good bullpen overall; they're pretty good at throwing a lot of stuff at the wall and having some of it stick. And you know they'll be aggressive in filling any hole through a trade."

November. With so many players at the top of the salary scale, the Mets need high-impact, low-service time contributors like Alvarez, who could break out as an All-Star any season now.

DH/BENCH

Starling Marte is 36 and likely to shift to the DH role with the arrival of Soto in right. Marte, the majors’ active leader in stolen bases with 354, still moves well and can be a dangerous hitter. But he’s averaged only 90 games in the past two seasons, so it makes sense to preserve his body by getting him off the field and making the most of his last year under contract. Luis Torrens is a solid backup catcher, and the Mets should have a strong outfield defender on the bench most nights. Luisangel Acuña made an excellent impression in September.

MANAGEMENT

The Mets have carried the majors’ highest payroll in each of the past three seasons, and with Soto on board, it’s a safe bet they’ll keep the top spot for quite some time. In David Stearns, Cohen has a president of baseball operations who is also skilled at finding bargains along the margins of a roster. The duo made an excellent choice in hiring Carlos Mendoza as manager. Though he’d never guided a big league team before, Mendoza was a picture of tranquility despite a slow start and an excellent communicator with veterans and young players alike.

FINAL ANALYSIS

The Mets’ rotation looks ordinary, but there’s definite potential for upside — and if it’s a trouble spot by late summer, Stearns will surely be aggressive in finding help. The offense should be among the league’s best, and the Mets have an alignment of purpose among the leaders in the front office, the dugout and the clubhouse. This team should compete for the division title in a rugged NL East.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

LEADING MAN Francisco Lindor was hitting just .194 and mired in a 1-for-21 slump when manager Carlos Mendoza put him in the leadoff spot on May 18 in Miami. Lindor and Mendoza had talked about the idea, and Lindor was all for it — as long as Mendoza stuck with the plan. He stuck with it, all right: Lindor hit from no other spot the rest of the way, with stellar results. From May 18 through the rest of the regular season, Lindor hit .303/.374/.552, finishing as the runner-up to Shohei Ohtani for the NL MVP award and leading the Mets on a stirring run to within two wins of the World Series.

THEY'RE LOVIN' IT The Mets were 28-37 when a big-bodied, googly-eyed, short-arming righty took the mound at Citi Field on June 12. That’s when Grimace, a McDonald’s character, delivered a ceremonial first pitch. It’s also the moment the Mets took off, going 61-36 from that point forward. The blue-and-orange faithful embraced the purple blob, adopting him (it?) as an honorary mascot. Fans wore Grimace costumes to games. Grimace himself rode the 7 train to the ballpark. And the Mets immortalized his impact by installing a purple “Grimace seat” in section 302 of the right field upper deck: row 6, seat 12, to commemorate his pitch from 6/12.

NUMBERS GAME Before Steve Cohen bought the team in 2020, the franchise had been notoriously stingy about retiring numbers of former Mets, giving the honor to only Tom Seaver (41), Mike Piazza (31) and managers Casey Stengel (37) and Gil Hodges (14). Cohen, a lifelong Mets fan, has doubled that total, adding Jerry Koosman (36) in 2021, Willie Mays (24) and Keith Hernandez (17) in 2022 and Dwight Gooden (16) and Darryl Strawberry (18) last season. Unlike the crosstown Yankees, who have retired every single-digit number besides 0, the Mets have still retired no single digits — though that will change when No. 5, David Wright, gets his day this July 19.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27 HOU	28	29 HOU
30 HOU	31 MIA	1 MIA	2 MIA	3	4 TOR	5 TOR
6 TOR	7 MIA	8 MIA	9 MIA	10	11 A's	12 A's
13 A's	14 MIN	15 MIN	16 MIN	17 STL	18 STL	19 STL
20 STL	21 PHI	22 PHI	23 PHI	24	25 WAS	26 WAS
27 WAS	28 WAS	29 ARI	30 ARI			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 ARI	2 STL	3 STL
4 STL	5 ARI	6 ARI	7 ARI	8	9 CHC	10 CHC
11 CHC	12 PIT	13 PIT	14 PIT	15	16 NYY	17 NYY
18 NYY	19 BOS	20 BOS	21 BOS	22	23 LAD	24 LAD
25 LAD	26 CWS	27 CWS	28 CWS	29	30 COL	31 COL
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 COL	2 LAD	3 LAD	4 LAD	5 LAD	6 COL	7 COL
8 COL	9	10 WAS	11 WAS	12 WAS	13 TB	14 TB
15 TB	16	17 ATL	18 ATL	19 ATL	20 PHI	21 PHI
22 PHI	23 ATL	24 ATL	25 ATL	26 ATL	27 PIT	28 PIT
29 PIT	30					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 MIL	2 MIL	3 MIL	4 NYY	5 NYY
6 NYY	7	8 BAL	9 BAL	10 BAL	11 KC	12 KC
13 KC	14	15 ALL-STAR BREAK	16	17	18 CIN	19 CIN
20 CIN	21 LAA	22 LAA	23 LAA	24	25 SF	26 SF
27 SF	28 SD	29 SD	30 SD	31		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 SF	2 SF
3 SF	4 CLE	5 CLE	6 CLE	7	8 MIL	9 MIL
10 MIL	11	12 ATL	13 ATL	14 ATL	15 SEA	16 SEA
17 SEA	18	19 WAS	20 WAS	21 WAS	22 ATL	23 ATL
24 ATL	25 PHI	26 PHI	27 PHI	28 MIA	29 MIA	30 MIA
31 MIA						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 DET	2 DET	3 DET	4	5 CIN	6 CIN
7 CIN	8 PHI	9 PHI	10 PHI	11 PHI	12 TEX	13 TEX
14 TEX	15	16 SD	17 SD	18 SD	19 WAS	20 WAS
21 WAS	22	23 CHC	24 CHC	25 CHC	26 MIA	27 MIA
28 MIA	29	30				

STATISTICIAN

9 Team shutouts by Mets pitchers, all after the 90-game mark of the season.

11 Walk-off wins for the Mets in 2024, tied with the Giants and Mariners for most in MLB.

92 Times that Mets batters were hit by a pitch, leading the NL for the third season in a row.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



- 1. **Brandon Sproat, RHP (24)** Profiles as a No. 2 starter and should reach the majors in 2025.
- 2. **Jett Williams, SS/OF (21)** Has the athleticism to thrive at shortstop or in center field.
- 3. **Ryan Clifford, 1B/OF (21)** Showed good power (19 homers) with a .372 OBP at two levels.
- 4. **Carson Benge, OF (22)** Shows an advanced approach at the plate and could move quickly.
- 5. **Drew Gilbert, OF (24)** The Mets expect Gilbert to rediscover his 2023 Double-A promise.
- 6. **Ronny Mauricio, INF/OF (23)** Missed 2024 with a torn ACL and had knee surgery in August.
- 7. **Jeremy Rodriguez, SS/2B (18)** Controls the zone well and has shown excellent speed.
- 8. **Blade Tidwell, RHP (23)** Will get another chance at Triple-A to recapture his promise from 2023.
- 9. **Nolan McLean, RHP (23)** Fastball/sweeper combo could make him a power reliever.
- 10. **Jonah Tong, RHP (21)** High-spin fastball helps him thrive up in the zone (12.7 K's per nine).

Mets Roster

David Stearns: President, Baseball Operations • Manager Carlos Mendoza • Coaches: Danny Barnes (strategy), Jeremy Barnes (hitting), Eric Chavez (hitting), John Gibbons (bench), Jeremy Hefner (pitching), Antoan Richardson (first base), José Rosado (bullpen), Mike Sarbaugh (third base), Glenn Sherlock (catching & strategy)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO						
58	Paul Blackburn	R-R	6-1	196	12/4/93	NEW YORK NL	1-2	5.18	5	5	0	24.1	31	7	21						
						Syracuse (AAA)	0-0	1.35	1	1	0	6.2	4	1	4						
						OAKLAND	4-2	4.41	9	9	0	51.0	45	14	38						
						Las Vegas (AAA)	1-1	13.50	2	1	0	3.1	9	3	2						
						Stockton (A)	0-0	40.50	1	0	0	0.2	2	2	1						
43	Huascar Brazobán	R-R	6-3	155	10/15/89	NEW YORK NL	0-1	5.14	19	0	0	21.0	18	14	17						
						MIAMI	1-2	2.93	20	0	0	30.2	20	11	34						
						Jacksonville (AAA)	1-1	5.91	6	0	0	10.2	13	3	10						
70	José Buttó	R-R	6-1	202	3/19/98	NEW YORK NL	7-3	2.55	30	7	3	74.0	41	38	79						
						Syracuse (AAA)	5-2	3.05	8	8	0	44.1	36	18	38						
						Griffin Canning	R-R	6-2	180	5/11/96	LOS ANGELES AL	6-13	5.19	32	31	0	171.2	174	66	130	
	Dylan Covey	R-R	6-1	215	8/14/91	Lehigh Valley (AAA)	0-0	1.20	15	0	3	15.0	9	7	16						
						Reading (AA)	0-1	1.80	2	0	0	5.0	5	0	2						
						Clearwater (A)	0-1	81.00	1	0	0	0.1	2	2	1						
39	Edwin Díaz	R-R	6-3	165	3/22/94	NEW YORK NL	6-4	3.52	54	0	20	53.2	36	20	84						
						Brooklyn (A+)	1-0	0.00	2	0	0	2.0	1	1	3						
75	Reed Garrett	R-R	6-2	195	1/2/93	NEW YORK NL	8-5	3.77	53	0	4	57.1	50	30	83						
						Syracuse (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	3.0	2	1	7						
						Binghamton (AA)	0-1	81.00	1	0	0	0.1	4	1	1						
						Justin Hagenman	R-R	6-3	205	10/7/96	Worcester (AAA)	4-6	4.91	28	15	0	91.2	90	31	98	
	Kevin Herget	L-R	5-10	185	4/3/91	MILWAUKEE	0-0	1.59	7	0	1	11.1	6	3	9						
						Nashville (AAA)	5-1	2.27	38	0	4	47.2	34	11	59						
						35	Clay Holmes	R-R	6-5	245	3/27/93	NEW YORK AL	3-5	3.14	67	0	30	63.0	60	22	68
32	Max Kranick	R-R	6-3	220	7/21/97	Syracuse (AAA)	2-1	3.57	41	4	2	63.0	57	20	53						
						Binghamton (AA)	0-0	1.50	2	2	0	6.0	3	2	8						
						St. Lucie (A)	0-1	21.60	2	2	0	1.2	7	2	3						
						59	Sean Manaea	R-L	6-5	245	2/1/92	NEW YORK NL	12-6	3.47	32	32	0	181.2	134	63	184
38	Tylor Megill	R-R	6-7	230	7/28/95	NEW YORK NL	4-5	4.04	16	15	0	78.0	70	32	91						
						Syracuse (AAA)	3-0	3.68	9	9	0	44.0	34	20	57						
						Binghamton (AA)	0-0	3.38	1	1	0	2.2	2	0	4						
						Brooklyn (A+)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	2.0	0	0	6						
						Frankie Montas	R-R	6-2	255	3/21/93	CINCINNATI	4-8	5.01	19	19	0	93.1	93	41	78	
						MILWAUKEE	3-3	4.55	11	11	0	57.1	47	25	70						
						72	Dedniel Núñez	R-R	6-2	180	6/5/96	NEW YORK NL	2-0	2.31	25	0	1	35.0	24	8	48
						Syracuse (AAA)						3-0	1.29	14	0	2	14.0	8	6	21	
23	David Peterson	L-L	6-6	240	9/3/95	NEW YORK NL	10-3	2.90	21	21	0	121.0	110	46	101						
						Syracuse (AAA)	1-1	2.79	2	2	0	9.2	12	2	11						
						Binghamton (AA)	1-0	0.00	1	1	0	5.1	5	0	8						
						St. Lucie (A)	0-0	0.00	3	3	0	8.2	2	1	16						
71	Sean Reid-Foley	R-R	6-3	230	8/30/95	NEW YORK NL	1-2	1.66	23	0	0	21.2	13	14	25						
						Syracuse (AAA)	0-0	4.15	4	0	0	4.1	6	2	3						
						Binghamton (AA)	0-1	16.20	3	0	0	1.2	1	5	4						
						Brooklyn (A+)	0-0	10.80	2	0	0	1.2	2	1	3						
45	Christian Scott	R-R	6-4	215	6/15/99	NEW YORK NL	0-3	4.56	9	9	0	47.1	45	12	39						
						Syracuse (AAA)	3-0	2.76	9	9	0	42.1	29	12	55						
34	Kodai Senga	L-R	6-1	202	1/30/93	NEW YORK NL	1-0	3.38	1	1	0	5.1	2	1	9						
						Syracuse (AAA)	0-0	4.76	4	4	0	11.1	12	8	9						
						Brooklyn (A+)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	2.2	0	0	6						
81	Danny Young	L-L	6-3	200	5/27/94	NEW YORK NL	4-1	4.54	42	0	0	37.2	29	18	48						
						Syracuse (AAA)	1-1	1.26	15	0	3	14.1	8	12	22						
54	Tyler Zuber	R-R	5-11	195	6/16/95	TAMPA BAY	0-0	2.70	2	0	0	3.1	3	2	4						
						Durham (AAA)	3-0	2.49	18	0	4	21.2	16	6	29						
						Syracuse (AAA)	0-3	12.38	17	0	0	16.0	28	15	18						
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB					
4	Francisco Alvarez	R-R	5-10	233	11/19/01	NEW YORK NL	.237	100	308	39	73	11	47	30	86	1					
						Binghamton (AA)	.250	3	8	2	2	1	3	1	2	0					
						Brooklyn (A+)	.091	3	11	0	1	0	0	2	1	0					
13	Luis Torrens	R-R	5-11	217	5/2/96	NEW YORK NL	.229	48	118	14	27	3	15	9	28	0					
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	.279	30	111	17	31	5	19	10	29	1					
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB					
2	Luisangel Acuña	R-R	5-8	181	3/12/02	NEW YORK NL	.308	14	39	6	12	3	6	1	6	0					
						Syracuse (AAA)	.258	131	547	90	141	7	50	32	96	40					
	Brett Baty	L-R	6-2	210	11/13/99	NEW YORK NL	.229	50	153	15	35	4	16	16	42	0					
						Syracuse (AAA)	.252	62	230	37	58	16	45	33	57	1					
	Luis De Los Santos	R-R	6-1	160	6/9/98	TORONTO	.172	13	29	2	5	0	1	2	10	0					
						Buffalo (AAA)	.260	43	127	25	33	6	16	21	35	3					
						Dunedin (A)	.500	1	4	2	2	1	2	0	2	0					
						FCL Blue Jays (R)	.286	3	7	2	2	0	2	1	2	0					
12	Francisco Lindor	S-R	5-11	190	11/14/93	NEW YORK NL	.273	152	618	107	169	33	91	56	127	29					
10	Ronny Mauricio	S-R	6-3	166	4/4/01	INJURED — Missed Season															
1	Jeff McNeil	L-R	6-1	195	4/8/92	NEW YORK NL	.238	129	424	57	101	12	44	35	68	5					
27	Mark Vientos	R-R	6-4	185	12/11/99	NEW YORK NL	.266	111	413	58	110	27	71	33	135	0					
						Syracuse (AAA)	.284	31	116	21	33	6	30	16	38	0					
						Jared Young	L-R	6-1	200	7/9/95	Memphis (AAA)	.285	74	235	46	67	11	35	41	53	6
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB					
	José Azocar	R-R	5-11	181	5/11/96	SAN DIEGO	.219	61	73	13	16	0	2	5	19	5					
						El Paso (AAA)	.282	51	209	29	59	4	29	7	35	24					
						Syracuse (AAA)	.353	13	51	14	18	2	12	2	7	6					
						6	Starling Marte	R-R	6-1	195	10/9/88	NEW YORK NL	.269	94	335	46	90	7	40	27	81
Syracuse (AAA)	.182	3	11	1	2	0						1	0	0	0						
Binghamton (AA)	.000	1	2	0	0	0						0	1	1	0						
St. Lucie (A)	.400	2	5	1	2	1						1	0	2	1						
9	Brandon Nimmo	L-R	6-3	206	3/27/93	NEW YORK NL	.224	151	571	88	128	23	90	77	158	15					
						Jose Siri	R-R	6-2	210	7/22/95	TAMPA BAY	.187	130	402	50	75	18	47	31	170	14
22	Juan Soto	L-L	6-2	224	10/25/98	NEW YORK AL	.288	157	576	128	166	41	109	129	119	7					
15	Tyrone Taylor	R-R	6-1	218	1/22/94	NEW YORK NL	.248	130	319	47	79	7	35	19	80	11					

Philadelphia PHILLIES

2025 PREDICTION
1ST
 NL EAST
 2024 FINISH: 1st (95-67)

The 2024 Phillies won 95 games, second-most in MLB, and claimed their first NL East title since 2011. They return an expensive, star-studded core, and expectations remain as high as the light towers at Citizens Bank Park. But it's reasonable to wonder about this team. Is it the club that sprinted out to a majors-best 45-19 record by the second week of June last season? Or the one that was a mediocre 51-51 the rest of the way and had a painfully quick playoff exit? "This is a championship roster," manager Rob Thomson insists.

There's no doubt the Phillies have the personnel, but can their offense avoid the sudden droughts that have scuttled the last two postseasons? Can a slightly tweaked bullpen bounce back after a dreadful October? Can the starting rotation deliver consistently after the top two spots? If the answers are yes, this championship roster could finally be a championship team.

ROTATION

Top to bottom, this projects as one the best with veteran righthanders Zack Wheeler and Aaron Nola in the first two spots and exciting, power-armed prospect Andrew Painter set to arrive around mid-season. In between, there are three quality lefties — Ranger Suárez, Cristopher Sánchez and Jesús Luzardo — who are all capable of dominating an opposing lineup. Wheeler and Nola combined for 46 quality starts in 2024. Since the start of 2021, Wheeler has the best fWAR among MLB pitchers at 22.7, and Nola is fourth at 17.7. In addition to being effective, they are durable workhorses. Nola leads the majors in innings at 778.2 since the start of 2021, and Wheeler is third at 758.1. Wheeler led the NL in WHIP (0.96), opponents batting average (.191) and quality starts (26) in 2024. He was second in innings (200) and ERA (2.57) while finishing second in the Cy Young race for the second time in four years. The righthander turns 35 in May and is starting the first year of a three-year extension that carries a \$42 million average annual value and may take him to the end of his career. Sánchez needs to build on a breakthrough 2024 season, while Suárez needs to be more the guy that dazzled early, not the guy who faded with injury and ineffectiveness in the second half. He had a 1.83 ERA in his first 16 starts and was being mentioned as a Cy Young candidate. After a stint on the injured list with back soreness, he had an ERA of 6.54 over his final 11 starts. Luzardo battled back and elbow issues and was limited to just 12 starts with Miami last season. If healthy, he's got top-end stuff.

BULLPEN

A strength in 2024, at least until its postseason implosion, the bullpen has undergone some changes. As high-leverage arms Jeff Hoffman and Carlos Estévez headed to free agency, the team took a potentially high-reward flier on righthander Jordan Romano, a two-time All-Star with Toronto before having his elbow surgically cleaned up last summer. Romano, who had 95 saves from 2021 to 2023, will be part of a late-game mix that includes lefties Matt Strahm



Bryce Harper

Citizens Bank Park

Opened: 2004 • Capacity: 42,901
 Left: 329' Center: 401' Right: 330'
 Tickets: 215-463-1000
mlb.com/PHILLIES

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Highest rate of opponent swings on pitches outside the strike zone, 2024

1. Cristopher Sánchez, Phillies	39.3
2. Shota Imanaga, Cubs	38.9
3. Bailey Ober, Twins	37.1
4. Chris Sale, Braves	36.9
5. Kutter Crawford, Red Sox	36.7

BILL STREICHER-IMAGN IMAGES

and José Alvarado and righthander Orion Kerkerling, a homegrown talent who has gained experience and has the stuff to close one day. Lefty Tanner Banks and righthanders José Ruiz and Joe Ross round out a unit that could continue to evolve.

MIDDLE INFIELD

Talent-wise, this is one of the best duos in baseball. But Trea Turner and Bryson Stott both have flaws. Turner's defense at shortstop has become an issue. In two years as a Phillie, he's made 40 errors, up from 27 the previous two seasons. On the new-school scale, he's a minus-26 in Defensive Runs Saved as a Phillie. He was a flat zero the two years before joining the club. Offensively, Turner can be hot and cold, but when he's hot, he's a stud who can impact the game with his hit tool,

his power and his baserunning. The Phillies need more consistency on both sides of the ball from him. Stott is a strong defender at second, but his offense declined in 2024, and he had trouble driving fastballs, possibly because of a sore elbow that was kept quiet. If Turner improves in the field and Stott at the plate, this team will have something.

CORNERS

Bryce Harper remains one of the game's premier talents. He conquered a new challenge in 2024, moving to first base and becoming a Gold Glove finalist. At the plate, he remained a middle-of-the-order force with 72 extra-base hits, including 30 homers, and an .898 OPS, fourth-best in the NL, all while

playing through nagging wrist and elbow soreness. He was twice NL Player of the Month and finished sixth in MVP voting. Third baseman Alec Bohm has improved to become an above-average defender. He joined Harper as an All-Star starter in 2024. He tailed off in the second half but still finished with 44 doubles, second-most in the NL, and 97 RBIs. Bohm was the subject of many offseason trade rumors. Will that fuel a big season or lead to more trade talk?

OUTFIELD

Nick Castellanos overcame a slow start in 2024 to hit 23 home runs while playing in all 162 games. He has a penchant for the dramatic — five walk-off hits in 2024, including one in the postseason. Veteran newcomer Max Kepler comes aboard to play left field for the first time in his big-league career. He's expected to add some pop to the bottom third of the order. Brandon Marsh will get an opportunity to play center field. He's sound defensively but struggles against lefty pitching, which could make defensive whiz Johan Rojas a platoon option.



Trea Turner

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

DH	Kyle Schwarber (L)
SS	Trea Turner (R)
1B	Bryce Harper (L)
RF	Nick Castellanos (R)
2B	Bryson Stott (L)
3B	Alec Bohm (R)
LF	Max Kepler (L)
C	J.T. Realmuto (R)
CF	Brandon Marsh (L)

■ BENCH

INF	Edmundo Sosa (R)
C	Garrett Stubbs (L)
OF	Johan Rojas (R)
INF/OF	Kody Clemens (L)

■ ROTATION

RHP	Zack Wheeler
RHP	Aaron Nola
LHP	Ranger Suárez
LHP	Cristopher Sánchez
LHP	Jesús Luzardo

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Jordan Romano (C)
RHP	Orion Kerkerling
LHP	Matt Strahm
LHP	José Alvarado
LHP	Tanner Banks
RHP	José Ruiz
RHP	Taijuan Walker
RHP	Joe Ross

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE PHILLIES "They won the division, but if Atlanta's big guys are healthy, I don't think the Phillies have done enough to hold them off. They're a very good team, but at some point, they're gonna get stagnant, so you'd love to see someone come up from their system and make a big impact. Aidan Miller and Andrew Painter are pretty close to can't-miss guys, so keep a close eye on their progress. Bryce Harper and Trea Turner are great, but they play so hard, it's tough to keep them on the field throughout a full season. If they back off a little on J.T. Realmuto, they'll need to replace his offense when he's not in the lineup; is this the year Rafael Marchán stays healthy and shows what he can do? No matter what, their rotation will keep them in almost every game. Zack Wheeler and Aaron Nola are as reliable a high-quality 1-2 as you'll find, and Ranger Suárez, Christopher Sánchez and Jesús Luzardo are a formidable lefty trio in the 3-5 spots. And I'll ride with that bullpen: Jordan Romano, José Alvarado, Matt Strahm and Orion Kerkerling."

CATCHING

One of the team’s most steadying forces and a fixture behind the plate for six seasons, J.T. Realmuto, who turns 34 in March, enters the final year of his contract. He missed six weeks after requiring a surgical knee cleanup in June 2024, and his offense stagnated. He remained a defensive force, with an average pop time of 1.85 seconds that ranked among the game’s elite. The Phils may look to maximize Realmuto by trimming his playing time. Veteran Garrett Stubbs and Rafael Marchán, who is out of options, will compete for the backup job.

DH/BENCH

Kyle Schwarber excelled in a move to full-time DH in 2024. He raised his batting average from .197 to .248 and his OPS from .817 to .851. He led the league in walks (106) and was third in runs (110) and homers (38). In three seasons with the Phillies, Schwarber has 131 homers, 302 RBIs and an .832 OPS. He could be primed for a big season in his walk year. Edmundo Sosa and Kody Clemens figure importantly on the bench with whoever emerges as the backup catcher.

MANAGEMENT

The Phils are 250-185 in three seasons under Thomson, the first Phillies skipper to make the postseason in each of his first three seasons. Despite his résumé, Thomson could feel some heat with another quick October exit. Ownership has bankrolled huge payrolls and is starving for a world championship.

FINAL ANALYSIS

This team is getting older but still has elite talent and championship-level tread on its tires. Good health is a must, especially at the top of the rotation and batting order. Mindful of October failures, president of baseball ops Dave Dombrowski says, “We have enough stars. It’s about playing well at the right time.”



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

CHANGE AT THE TOP? Kyle Schwarber is not a prototypical leadoff man, but the slugging DH has produced good results in three seasons filling the role. The Phillies have made the postseason each of his three years with the club. Despite Schwarber’s unique contributions at leadoff, manager Rob Thomson has hinted that he may move the slugger down in the order, possibly to cleanup behind Bryce Harper. Schwarber started using the whole field more and raised his average from .188 to .300 against lefties in 2024. That has Thomson thinking he could stack the two lefty power bats in the middle, with Schwarber offering Harper more protection. Who leads off? Thomson has always believed Bryson Stott could do it. Trea Turner would be another candidate. Harper would be interesting in a Shohei Ohtani kind of way. Or maybe it’s Schwarber once again.

POSTSEASON STUD Among all players with at least 140 plate appearances in the postseason, Harper’s 1.016 OPS ranks fifth behind Lou Gehrig (1.214), Babe Ruth (1.214), George Brett (1.023) and Carlos Beltrán (1.021).

POSTSEASON ACE In 70.1 postseason innings, Zack Wheeler has a 2.18 ERA and has held hitters to a .151 batting average. Among the 276 pitchers who have faced 140 or more batters in the postseason, he ranks first in WHIP (0.73).

THERE ARE LIMITS Over the last handful of winters, the Phillies signed Harper (\$330 million) and Turner (\$300 million) to huge contracts. Nick Castellanos, J.T. Realmuto, Aaron Nola and Wheeler got deals of \$100 million or more. The Phils have paid luxury tax three straight years and are expected to eclipse the \$301 million fourth tax threshold in 2025. Cognizant of their growing payroll, they exercised frugality, stayed away from top-tier free agents, and signed bounce-back candidates Jordan Romano and Max Kepler to one-year deals. They are also looking for their top trade acquisition, starter Jesús Luzardo, to bounce back from an injury-plagued season.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27	28	29
				WAS		WAS
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
WAS	COL		COL	COL	LAD	LAD
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
LAD		ATL	ATL	ATL	STL	STL
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
STL	SF	SF	SF	SF	MIA	MIA
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
MIA	NYM	NYM	NYM		CHC	CHC
27	28	29	30			
CHC		WAS	WAS			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
				WAS	ARI	ARI
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
ARI		TB	TB	TB	CLE	CLE
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
CLE	STL	STL	STL		PIT	PIT
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
PIT	COL	COL	COL	COL	A's	A's
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
A's		ATL	ATL	ATL	MIL	MIL
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
MIL		TOR	TOR	TOR	PIT	PIT
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
PIT	CHC	CHC	CHC		TOR	TOR
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
TOR	MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA	NYM	NYM
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
NYM		HOU	HOU	HOU	ATL	ATL
29	30					
ATL	SD					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		SD	SD		CIN	CIN
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
CIN	SF	SF	SF		SD	SD
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
SD		ALL-STAR BREAK			LAA	LAA
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
LAA	BOS	BOS	BOS		NYN	NYN
27	28	29	30	31		
NYN	CWS	CWS	CWS			
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
					DET	DET
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
DET	BAL	BAL	BAL		TEX	TEX
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
TEX	CIN	CIN	CIN	WAS	WAS	WAS
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
WAS	SEA	SEA	SEA		WAS	WAS
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
WAS	NYM	NYM	NYM	ATL	ATL	ATL
31						
ATL						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	MIL		MIL	MIL	MIA	MIA
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
MIA	NYM	NYM	NYM	NYM	KC	KC
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
KC	LAD	LAD	LAD		ARI	ARI
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
ARI		MIA	MIA	MIA	MIN	MIN
28	29	30				
MIN						

STATISTICIAN

8 Phillies All-Stars in 2024, tying the MLB record.

54-27 The Phillies' MLB-best home record in 2024.

11.37 The bullpen's ERA in losing the NLDS to the Mets in 2024.

TOP-10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Andrew Painter, RHP (21)**
The Phils' most touted pitching prospect since Cole Hamels.

■ **2. Aidan Miller, SS (20)** Outstanding offensively and defensively. Ball jumps off his bat.

■ **3. Justin Crawford, CF (21)** His speed makes an impact in the field and on the bases.

■ **4. Eduardo Tait, C (18)** Big buzz about this lefty hitter with rocket arm and high exit velos.

■ **5. Mick Abel, RHP (23)** There's a lot to like about this former first-rounder, but it's time to start throwing strikes.

■ **6. Moisés Chace, RHP (21)** Racked up strikeouts after arriving in a mid-season trade.

■ **7. Griffin Burkholder, OF (19)** Second-round draft pick in 2024 has plus speed, projectable bat.

■ **8. Bryan Rincon, SS (21)** A stellar defender and switch-hitter with good contact skills.

■ **9. Devin Saltiban, 2B (20)** Strong, compact middle infielder from Hawaii has an intriguing bat.

■ **10. Gabriel Rincones Jr., OF (24)** Corner outfielder with power and the potential for more.

Phillies Roster

President, Baseball Operations: David Dombrowski • Manager: Rob Thomson • Coaches: Mike Calitri (bench), Caleb Cotham (pitching), Bobby Dickerson (infield), Paco Figueroa (first base), Brad Flanders (asst. catching), Dustin Lind (asst. hitting), Kevin Long (hitting), Mark Lowy (asst. pitching), Rafael Pena (asst. hitting), Hector Rabago (asst. catching), César Ramos (bullpen), Dusty Wathan (third base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
	Mick Abel	R-R	6-5	190	8/18/01	Lehigh Valley (AAA)	3-12	6.46	24	24	0	108.2	119	78	117	
46	José Alvarado	L-L	6-2	245	5/21/95	PHILADELPHIA	2-5	4.09	66	0	13	61.2	49	28	63	
58	Tanner Banks	R-L	6-1	205	10/24/91	PHILADELPHIA	0-1	3.70	22	1	0	24.1	22	10	23	
						CHICAGO AL	2-2	4.13	41	1	2	48.0	47	15	55	
	Jean Cabrera	R-R	6-0	145	10/20/01	Reading (AA)	1-1	4.85	6	5	0	29.2	37	8	19	
						Jersey Shore (A+)	5-4	3.39	14	14	0	77.0	59	25	91	
	Moisés Chace	R-R	6-1	213	6/9/03	Reading (AA)	2-1	3.66	4	4	0	19.2	14	7	35	
						Jersey Shore (A+)	1-1	4.15	2	2	0	8.2	6	3	13	
						Aberdeen (A+)	2-2	3.46	17	9	1	52.0	37	30	76	
	Jose Cuas	R-R	6-3	195	6/28/94	CHICAGO NL	0-0	7.43	9	0	0	13.1	16	6	14	
						Iowa (AAA)	1-1	6.35	10	0	1	11.1	11	9	24	
						TORONTO	0-0	9.00	4	0	0	3.0	3	4	3	
						Buffalo (AAA)	1-1	6.89	16	0	1	15.2	22	7	16	
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	0-1	4.91	4	0	0	3.2	4	2	5	
51	Seth Johnson	R-R	6-1	205	9/19/98	PHILADELPHIA	0-1	34.71	1	1	0	2.1	8	3	0	
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	2-1	2.74	5	5	0	23.0	15	14	19	
						Reading (AA)	0-1	3.52	2	2	0	7.2	8	1	9	
						Bowie (AA)	0-6	2.63	18	18	0	65.0	51	35	61	
50	Orion Kerkering	R-R	6-2	204	4/4/01	PHILADELPHIA	5-3	2.29	64	2	0	63.0	51	17	74	
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	2.0	2	0	3	
						Clearwater (A)	1-0	0.00	2	0	0	2.1	0	0	7	
60	Max Lazar	R-R	6-1	200	6/3/99	PHILADELPHIA	0-0	4.61	11	0	0	13.2	13	2	9	
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	4-3	2.45	29	0	10	33.0	24	10	38	
						Reading (AA)	0-0	0.00	8	0	3	10.1	3	0	18	
	Jesús Luzardo	L-L	6-0	218	9/30/97	MIAMI	3-6	5.00	12	12	0	66.2	61	22	58	
						Jupiter (A)	1-0	0.00	1	1	0	5.2	1	1	6	
63	Michael Mercado	R-R	6-4	205	4/15/99	PHILADELPHIA	1-2	11.08	5	2	0	13.0	16	9	10	
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	3-1	2.07	32	10	1	69.2	51	35	64	
27	Aaron Nola	R-R	6-2	200	6/4/93	PHILADELPHIA	14-8	3.57	33	33	0	199.1	189	50	197	
48	Tyler Phillips	R-R	6-5	225	10/27/97	PHILADELPHIA	4-1	6.87	8	7	0	36.2	45	7	28	
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	8-5	5.08	20	20	0	118.2	117	49	100	
	Alan Rangel	R-R	6-2	170	8/21/97	Lehigh Valley (AAA)	1-2	4.30	10	5	0	29.1	23	8	25	
						Clearwater (A)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	2.0	1	0	4	
						Rocket City (AA)	2-0	2.61	4	4	0	20.2	15	5	25	
						ACL Angels (R)	0-0	6.75	3	3	0	5.1	5	1	8	
68	Jordan Romano	R-R	6-5	210	4/21/93	TORONTO	1-2	6.59	15	0	8	13.2	16	4	13	
						Buffalo (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	1.0	1	4	1	
41	Joe Ross	R-R	6-4	243	5/21/93	MILWAUKEE	3-6	3.77	25	10	0	74.0	72	29	66	
66	José Ruiz	R-R	6-1	245	10/21/94	PHILADELPHIA	5-1	3.71	52	0	1	51.0	51	17	52	
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	0-1	1.64	10	0	3	11.0	7	3	13	
61	Cristopher Sánchez	L-L	6-1	165	12/12/96	PHILADELPHIA	11-9	3.32	31	31	0	181.2	182	44	153	
25	Matt Strahm	R-L	6-2	190	11/12/91	PHILADELPHIA	6-2	1.87	66	0	3	62.2	36	11	79	
55	Ranger Suárez	L-L	6-1	217	8/26/95	PHILADELPHIA	12-8	3.46	27	27	0	150.2	140	41	145	
	Devin Sweet	S-R	5-11	183	9/6/96	Toledo (AAA)	9-6	3.91	52	4	4	76.0	62	38	111	
	Kyle Tyler	R-R	6-0	200	12/27/96	MIAMI	0-2	5.40	8	7	0	31.2	37	18	25	
						Jacksonville (AAA)	4-2	3.06	11	9	0	50.0	39	21	44	
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	1-2	5.82	7	7	0	34.0	36	13	36	
99	Taijuan Walker	R-R	6-4	235	8/13/92	PHILADELPHIA	3-7	7.10	19	15	0	83.2	107	37	58	
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	1-0	4.09	2	2	0	11.0	10	6	2	
						Reading (AA)	0-0	3.52	2	2	0	7.2	6	1	6	
						Clearwater (A)	0-0	4.50	1	1	0	4.0	2	0	4	
45	Zack Wheeler	L-R	6-4	195	5/30/90	PHILADELPHIA	16-7	2.57	32	32	0	200.0	139	52	224	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
13	Rafael Marchán	S-R	5-9	170	2/25/99	PHILADELPHIA	.294	17	51	8	15	3	6	3	8	0
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.229	34	118	16	27	2	11	19	28	0
						Clearwater (A)	.273	4	11	2	3	1	3	3	1	1
10	J.T. Realmuto	R-R	6-1	212	3/18/91	PHILADELPHIA	.266	99	380	50	101	14	47	27	102	2
21	Garrett Stubbs	L-R	5-10	170	5/26/93	PHILADELPHIA	.207	56	164	18	34	1	11	17	50	5
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
28	Alec Bohm	R-R	6-5	218	8/3/96	PHILADELPHIA	.280	143	554	62	155	15	97	40	86	5
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.500	1	4	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
2	Kody Clemens	L-R	6-1	200	5/15/96	PHILADELPHIA	.219	44	114	17	25	5	18	5	29	0
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.266	68	274	43	73	14	50	20	63	6
3	Bryce Harper	L-R	6-3	210	10/16/92	PHILADELPHIA	.285	145	550	85	157	30	87	76	138	7
19	Buddy Kennedy	R-R	5-10	190	10/5/98	PHILADELPHIA	.182	8	11	1	2	0	2	2	3	0
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.294	67	248	44	73	10	35	41	45	2
						DETROIT	.200	6	10	2	2	1	4	2	4	1
						Toledo (AAA)	.234	39	141	25	33	3	14	19	39	2
33	Edmundo Sosa	R-R	6-0	210	3/6/96	PHILADELPHIA	.257	90	249	39	64	7	31	13	66	7
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.111	2	9	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
5	Bryson Stott	L-R	6-3	200	10/6/97	PHILADELPHIA	.245	148	506	65	124	11	57	53	93	32
7	Trea Turner	R-R	6-2	185	6/30/93	PHILADELPHIA	.295	121	505	88	149	21	62	27	98	19
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
8	Nick Castellanos	R-R	6-4	203	3/4/92	PHILADELPHIA	.254	162	606	80	154	23	86	41	139	6
26	Max Kepler	L-L	6-4	225	2/10/93	MINNESOTA	.253	105	368	43	93	8	42	22	80	1
						St. Paul (AAA)	.400	3	10	3	4	0	0	3	2	0
16	Brandon Marsh	L-R	6-4	215	12/18/97	PHILADELPHIA	.249	135	418	55	104	16	60	50	154	19
						Reading (AA)	.500	2	8	2	4	0	0	1	3	0
18	Johan Rojas	R-R	5-11	165	8/14/00	PHILADELPHIA	.243	120	338	47	82	3	32	13	69	25
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.382	8	34	7	13	1	3	2	6	6
12	Kyle Schwarber	L-R	6-0	229	3/5/93	PHILADELPHIA	.248	150	573	110	142	38	104	106	197	5
47	Cal Stevenson	L-L	5-9	175	9/12/96	PHILADELPHIA	.250	18	24	2	6	0	6	3	4	0
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.302	101	321	68	97	8	44	68	66	29
37	Weston Wilson	R-R	6-1	215	9/11/94	PHILADELPHIA	.284	41	88	13	25	3	10	8	29	3
						Lehigh Valley (AAA)	.240	71	263	49	63	18	55	42	76	14



Washington NATIONALS

2025 PREDICTION

4TH

NL EAST

2024 FINISH: 4TH (71-91)

A second straight 71-91 season in 2024 has the Nationals looking like a franchise treading water. But last season also saw the team take some major leaps forward. In shortstop CJ Abrams, left fielder James Wood, right fielder Dylan Crews and second baseman Luis García Jr. — none of whom will be older than 24 on Opening Day — the Nats have one of the more enviable young position-player cores in the majors, plus a rotation full of young arms still on the rise. In line with their recent track record, the Nationals picked around the edges of the talent market, re-signing Trevor Williams and Josh Bell to modest deals, taking a low-risk flyer on oft-injured starter Michael Soroka and trading for first baseman Nathaniel Lowe. The improvements will do little to erase the nagging feeling that the franchise's 20th anniversary season in D.C. will feature incremental steps at best.

ROTATION

The 2024 Nationals got 70 percent of their starts from pitchers in their first or second full big-league seasons — righthander Jake Irvin and lefties MacKenzie Gore, Mitchell Parker and DJ Herz — and that same quartet returns to head up the 2025 rotation. By both pedigree and stuff, Gore, a former elite prospect acquired in the 2022 Juan Soto trade, stands out as the ace, and the way he pitched at the end of 2024 — posting a 1.55 ERA and limiting opposing hitters to a .557 OPS over his final seven starts — he has the franchise looking for big things in 2025. Soroka, coming off a dismal year with the White Sox (0-10, 4.74), could still be an upgrade over the veteran he is replacing, lefty Patrick Corbin, and is the sort of low-risk, high-upside signing the Nats love. Williams and Soroka were smart depth signings, and both have significant upsides if healthy. The biggest unknown is what the Nats will get from Cade Cavalli, their former top-ranked prospect who had Tommy John surgery in March 2023 and then suffered a series of setbacks that kept him sidelined throughout 2024. At least publicly, the Nats are saying Cavalli should be fully back by spring training. Meanwhile, righthander Josiah Gray, their 2024 Opening Day starter, also underwent Tommy John surgery and isn't expected back until September at the earliest.

BULLPEN

This unit will look vastly different after the team traded Hunter Harvey at the deadline, non-tendered Kyle Finnegan and righthander Tanner Rainey and sent promising young lefty Robert Garcia to the Rangers in the Lowe trade. The return of lefty Jose A. Ferrer and right-handed workhorse Derek Law means there remains a foundation to build upon. The team also made an intriguing selection in the Rule 5 Draft, getting 25-year-old righthander Evan Reifert from Tampa Bay; Reifert posted a 1.96 ERA and struck out 14.2 batters per nine innings at Double-A last season, thanks largely to a wipeout slider that produced a whiff rate of 70 percent last year. But it would also be a huge surprise if the Nationals didn't add at least a couple of bullpen arms by the time spring training rolls around.



James Wood

Nationals Park

Opened: 2008 • Capacity: 41,313
Left: 336' Center: 403' Right: 335'
Tickets: 202-675-6287
mlb.com/NATIONALS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Highest single-season outfield
outs above average, 2021-24

1. 2024 Jacob Young, Nationals 20
2. 2022 Daulton Varsho, D'backs 18
3. 2021 Michael A. Taylor, Royals 17
3. 2022 Trent Grisham, Padres 17
3. 2021 Manuel Margot, Rays 17

MIDDLE INFIELD

Shortstop CJ Abrams became a first-time All-Star in 2024 and produced career highs in most offensive categories. But on Sept. 21, it all crashed down, when the Nationals unceremoniously demoted him to Triple-A. Though the team cited an unspecified “internal issue,” it was later reported that Abrams had been spotted in an all-night Chicago casino until 8 a.m. on the morning of a day game at Wrigley Field. The Nationals insist Abrams is back in their good graces, but the transgression — not to mention a second-half fall-off last year in which he posted just a .586 OPS and got noticeably chase-happy — has turned the upcoming season into something of a do-or-die one for Abrams. No such caveat is needed for second baseman García, who enjoyed a breakout season in 2024.

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

- SS CJ Abrams (L)
- LF James Wood (L)
- RF Dylan Crews (R)
- 1B Nathaniel Lowe (L)
- DH Josh Bell (S)
- 2B Luis García Jr. (L)
- 3B José Tena (L)
- C Keibert Ruiz (S)
- CF Jacob Young (R)

■ BENCH

- OF Stone Garrett (R)
- INF Trey Lipscomb (R)
- C Riley Adams (R)
- 1B/3B Andrés Chaparro (R)

■ ROTATION

- LHP MacKenzie Gore
- RHP Jake Irvin
- LHP DJ Herz
- LHP Mitchell Parker
- RHP Michael Soroka

■ BULLPEN

- LHP Jose A. Ferrer (C)
- RHP Derek Law
- RHP Eduardo Salazar
- RHP Evan Reifert
- RHP Joan Adon
- RHP Zach Brzykcy
- LHP Joe La Sorsa

CORNERS

The December trade for Lowe gives the Nationals an everyday first baseman who has earned a World Series ring, a Silver Slugger award and a Gold Glove in the previous three years. His left-handed bat will slot into the middle of the lineup, while his glove should provide some defensive stability for an infield defense that badly needed it. One of the biggest decisions facing the Nationals will be whether (and when) to promote third base prospect Brady House. House has the tools to make the leap, but he also played just 54 games at Triple-A in 2024, and struck out in 28.8 percent of his plate appearances there. The backup plan is likely to be José Tena, who showed promise after being acquired from Cleveland.



MacKenzie Gore

OUTFIELD

James Wood, a 6-foot-7 slugger, and Dylan Crews, a toolsy 5-foot-11 dynamo, both made the conversion from elite prospects to cornerstone pieces. They will man the corner positions, flanking center fielder Jacob Young, an elite defender who led the team with 33 stolen bases in 2024. Young, 25, led all major leaguers in Defensive Outs Above Average last season and was a finalist for a Gold Glove. At the plate, he showed a knack for both bunt singles and line-drive doubles.

CATCHING

Keibert Ruiz posted career-worst numbers almost across the board, including a .619 OPS that ranked as the third-lowest among players with as many plate ap-

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE NATIONALS “They need an adult in the room who plays every day, so trading for Nathaniel Lowe was a good idea. They’re really lacking defensively up the middle — Luis García Jr. is just OK at second, CJ Abrams is a terrible shortstop and Keibert Ruiz is an awful catcher. Jacob Young is a great defender in center, but he hasn’t shown he can hit yet. Going forward, this team is gonna be about Dylan Crews and James Wood. Crews is a game-changer, a leader — he just got there, and he was pissed about losing. Wood will be an All-Star; it’s just a matter of when. He’s got a great eye, but he’s a big guy and gets screwed at the bottom of the zone, like Aaron Judge does. Their rotation has a lot of 4s and 5s, unless MacKenzie Gore can harness his ridiculous stuff. He has the makeup; he just needs to be in and around the zone consistently. DJ Herz gets so much swing-and-miss on his four-seamer that I think he could be a dominant reliever if they put him there. They need more swing-and-miss in their bullpen, and they got a guy in the Rule 5 draft, Evan Reifert, who should give them some.”

pearances (485). On the other hand, Ruiz, a central piece of the Max Scherzer/Trea Turner trade of 2021, showed vastly improved defense, particularly in his ability to frame pitches and block balls. The Nationals signed him to an eight-year, \$50 million extension in 2023, so he gets a longer leash than most.

DH/BENCH

The return of Bell to the Nats (on a one-year, \$6 million deal) gives the team a professional bat, and a switch-hitter at that, to be their regular DH in 2025; the 19 homers he hit in 2024, which he split between Miami and Arizona, were more than every Nats hitter besides Abrams (20). This should close the revolving door at DH. The Nats have admirable position-player depth at the big-league level, and the bulk of their expected bench in 2025 — players such as infielders Andrés Chapparo and Trey Lipscomb, outfielders Alex Call and Stone Garrett and backup catchers Riley Adams and Drew Millas — all saw time in the majors last year.

MANAGEMENT

General manager Mike Rizzo is the third-longest-tenured front office chief in baseball, behind only Brian Cashman (Yankees) and John Mozeliak (Cardinals), and he has won a World Series title more recently (2019) than either of them. Rizzo and manager Davey Martinez, now entering his eighth season, have an exemplary working relationship. Martinez’s entire coaching staff returns intact.

FINAL ANALYSIS

By this point in the Nats’ rebuild, the team should be spending big to supplement a roster full of homegrown talent, but its fans know better by now than to expect such a thing. As such, the Nationals’ ceiling may be something along the lines of a .500 record and a third-place finish in the East.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

BEATING THE ODDS Winning the 2025 draft lottery (despite roughly 1-in-10 odds) earned the Nationals the top pick in July’s amateur draft, the club’s first time holding the top spot since getting Stephen Strasburg (2009) and Bryce Harper (2010) in back-to-back years. The lucky pick puts them in position to take third baseman Ethan Holliday, brother of Orioles prospect Jackson.

GLOVE WOES Normally, a pitcher’s fielding ability is far down the list of important attributes. But in the case of lefty starter Mitchell Parker, his issues fielding the ball in 2024 became so acute that the team needed to address them. In 151 innings pitched, Parker totaled only 13 fielding chances, but he made errors on a staggering five of those, resulting in a fielding percentage of .615.

TALL BALL At 6-foot-7, James Wood is used to being the tallest position player on the field most nights. However, he is no longer even the tallest in the Nationals’ organization, after the team signed former Phillies prospect Carlos De La Cruz — a 6-foot-8 outfielder — to a minor-league contract over the winter.

PLODDERS While MLB’s 2023 rule changes have proven to be a boon for stolen bases across the game, the 2024 Nationals may have been better off keeping their runners at first. They led the majors with 223 stolen-base attempts but were caught stealing 73 times — 20 more than any other team in the majors — giving them a success rate of 75 percent, third-worst in the NL.

BRIGHT SPOTS Veteran lefty Patrick Corbin, whose six-year, \$140 million contract expired at the end of 2024, ranked as one of the worst starters in the majors during the bulk of his time in Washington. However, two factors make it difficult to dismiss his contract as an albatross. First, he never missed a start in those six years. And second, he tossed three critical scoreless innings in Game 7 of the 2019 World Series, helping the franchise secure its first championship.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27 PHI	28	29 PHI
30 PHI	31 TOR	1 TOR	2 TOR	3	4 ARZ	5 ARZ
6 ARZ	7 LAD	8 LAD	9 LAD	10	11 MIA	12 MIA
13 MIA	14 PIT	15 PIT	16 PIT	17 PIT	18 COL	19 COL
20 COL	21	22 BAL	23 BAL	24 BAL	25 NYM	26 NYM
27 NYM	28 NYM	29 PHI	30 PHI			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 PHI	2 CIN	3 CIN
4 CIN	5 CLE	6 CLE	7 CLE	8	9 STL	10 STL
11 STL	12 ATL	13 ATL	14 ATL	15 ATL	16 BAL	17 BAL
18 BAL	19	20 ATL	21 ATL	22 ATL	23 SF	24 SF
25 SF	26	27 SEA	28 SEA	29 SEA	30 ARI	31 ARI
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 ARI	2	3 CHC	4 CHC	5 CHC	6 TEX	7 TEX
8 TEX	9	10 NYM	11 NYM	12 NYM	13 MIA	14 MIA
15 MIA	16 COL	17 COL	18 COL	19 COL	20 LAD	21 LAD
22 LAD	23 SD	24 SD	25 SD	26	27 LAA	28 LAA
29 LAA	30					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 DET	2 DET	3 DET	4 BOS	5 BOS
6 BOS	7	8 STL	9 STL	10 STL	11 MIL	12 MIL
13 MIL	14	15	16	17	18 SD	19 SD
20 SD	21 CIN	22 CIN	23 CIN	24	25 MIN	26 MIN
27 MIN	28 HOU	29 HOU	30 HOU	31		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 MIL	2 MIL
3 MIL	4	5 A's	6 A's	7 A's	8 SF	9 SF
10 SF	11 KC	12 KC	13 KC	14 PHI	15 PHI	16 PHI
17 PHI	18	19 NYM	20 NYM	21 NYM	22 PHI	23 PHI
24 PHI	25 NYY	26 NYY	27 NYY	28	29 TB	30 TB
31 TB						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 MIA	2 MIA	3 MIA	4	5 CHC	6 CHC
7 CHC	8 MIA	9 MIA	10 MIA	11 MIA	12 PIT	13 PIT
14 PIT	15 ATL	16 ATL	17 ATL	18	19 NYM	20 NYM
21 NYM	22 ATL	23 ATL	24 ATL	25	26 CWS	27 CWS
28 CWS	29	30				

STATISTICIAN

.407 Nationals' winning pct. since 2019 World Series title, worst mark in the majors in that span.

135 Number of home runs hit by the Nationals in 2024, 15 fewer than any other NL team.

73 Veteran lefty Patrick Corbin's ERA+ across the final five years of his six-year, \$140 million contract in D.C.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Dylan Crews, OF (23)**
Plus fielder hopes to make progress with the bat in 2025.

■ **2. Travis Sykora, RHP (20)**
2.33 ERA and 129 Ks over 85 IP at Single-A last season.

■ **3. Brady House, 3B (21)** Has exceptional raw power but has struggled to harness it.

■ **4. Jarlin Susana, RHP (21)**
Touches 103 mph with his fastball and features an improving slider.

■ **5. Seaver King, SS (21)** Spent his first year of pro ball in Single-A, slashing .295/.367/.385.

■ **6. Alex Clemmey, RHP (19)**
Struck out 12.0 batters per nine innings in 2024.

■ **7. Cade Cavalli, RHP (26)**
Various injuries culminated with Tommy John surgery in 2023.

■ **8. Caleb Lomavita, C (22)** Has ample power and an exceptional throwing arm.

■ **9. Luke Dickerson, SS (19)** A plus-runner, he can play all over the field.

■ **10. Daylen Lile, OF (22)** Has shown ample power for his underwhelming (5-11, 195) frame.

RAFAEL SUANES-IMAGN IMAGES

Nationals Roster

General Manager & President of Baseball Operations: Mike Rizzo • Manager: Dave Martinez • Coaches: Henry Blanco (catching), Ricky Bones (bullpen), Miguel Cairo (bench), Darnell Coles (hitting), Ricky Gutierrez (third base), Jim Hickey (pitching), Chris Johnson (asst. hitting), Gerardo Parra (first base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
66	Zach Brzykcy	R-R	6-2	208	7/12/99	WASHINGTON	0-0	14.29	6	0	0	5.2	9	3	4	
						Rochester (AAA)	1-0	1.13	7	0	0	8.0	3	1	7	
						Harrisburg (AA)	0-0	3.38	12	0	0	13.1	7	7	18	
						Wilmington (A+)	0-0	0.90	8	1	0	10.0	2	6	12	
						FCL Nationals (R)	1-0	2.25	3	1	0	4.0	3	0	6	
24	Cade Cavalli	R-R	6-4	223	8/14/98	Wilmington (A+)	0-0	3.18	2	2	0	5.2	0	4	8	
47	Jose A. Ferrer	L-L	6-1	233	3/3/00	WASHINGTON	1-0	3.38	31	0	1	32.0	27	6	25	
						Harrisburg (AA)	0-0	1.69	5	0	0	5.1	1	3	4	
						FCL Nationals (R)	1-0	2.70	3	0	0	3.1	2	1	5	
1	Mackenzie Gore	L-L	6-2	193	2/24/99	WASHINGTON	10-12	3.90	32	32	0	166.1	171	65	181	
40	Josiah Gray	R-R	6-1	209	12/21/97	WASHINGTON	0-2	14.04	2	2	0	8.1	15	5	9	
						Rochester (AAA)	0-0	8.00	2	2	0	9.0	10	1	5	
						Harrisburg (AA)	0-0	3.00	2	2	0	9.0	7	3	7	
						Fredericksburg (A)	0-1	9.00	1	1	0	3.0	3	1	2	
99	Cole Henry	R-R	6-4	200	7/15/99	Harrisburg (AA)	0-1	3.95	5	5	0	13.2	11	9	13	
						Wilmington (A+)	0-0	0.00	3	0	0	2.2	1	5	4	
74	DJ Herz	R-L	6-2	197	1/4/01	WASHINGTON	4-9	4.16	19	19	0	88.2	76	36	106	
						Rochester (AAA)	3-3	3.89	10	10	0	39.1	24	32	44	
27	Jake Irvin	R-R	6-6	234	2/18/97	WASHINGTON	10-14	4.41	33	33	0	187.2	173	52	156	
53	Joe La Sorsa	L-L	6-5	232	4/29/98	WASHINGTON	0-0	4.58	16	0	0	17.2	17	5	14	
						Rochester (AAA)	2-2	2.25	42	0	0	56.0	45	11	41	
72	Andry Lara	R-R	6-4	180	1/6/03	Harrisburg (AA)	9-7	3.63	19	19	0	104.0	89	35	93	
						Wilmington (A+)	2-4	2.35	6	6	0	30.2	23	9	39	
58	Derek Law	R-R	6-3	225	9/14/90	WASHINGTON	7-4	2.60	75	0	1	90.0	82	24	76	
70	Mitchell Parker	L-L	6-4	239	9/27/99	WASHINGTON	7-10	4.29	29	29	0	151.0	154	43	133	
68	Evan Reifert	R-R	6-4	190	5/14/99	Montgomery (AA)	2-0	1.96	35	0	0	41.1	22	16	65	
64	Orlando Ribalta	R-R	6-7	245	3/5/98	WASHINGTON	0-0	13.50	4	0	0	3.1	10	2	3	
						Rochester (AAA)	5-2	3.72	35	0	0	36.1	28	24	45	
						Harrisburg (AA)	1-0	1.00	16	0	5	18.0	10	8	32	
79	Jackson Rutledge	R-R	6-8	241	4/1/99	WASHINGTON	0-0	3.24	3	1	0	8.1	8	2	9	
						Rochester (AAA)	4-9	6.40	27	27	0	122.1	128	77	128	
62	Eduardo Salazar	R-R	6-2	177	5/5/98	WASHINGTON	0-1	2.96	25	0	0	27.1	31	12	24	
						Rochester (AAA)	1-0	0.75	10	0	0	12.0	9	3	17	
						LOS ANGELES NL	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	2.0	3	2	3	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	1-2	5.61	7	7	0	33.2	47	12	21	
						Tacoma (AAA)	1-0	5.40	4	0	0	3.1	3	3	1	
34	Michael Soroka	R-R	6-5	250	8/4/97	CHICAGO (AL)	0-10	4.74	25	9	0	79.2	66	44	84	
71	Mason Thompson	R-R	6-6	241	2/20/98	INJURED — Missed Season										
32	Trevor Williams	R-R	6-3	231	4/25/92	WASHINGTON	6-1	2.03	13	13	0	66.2	51	18	59	
						Harrisburg (AA)	0-0	2.45	2	2	0	7.1	8	1	5	
54	Amos Willingham	R-R	6-4	223	8/21/98	WASHINGTON	0-0	18.00	1	0	0	1.0	2	0	1	
						Rochester (AAA)	6-3	3.69	55	0	1	68.1	61	31	71	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
15	Riley Adams	R-R	6-4	263	6/26/96	WASHINGTON	.224	41	116	10	26	2	8	10	35	1
						Rochester (AAA)	.285	40	144	27	41	9	21	16	44	1
81	Drew Millas	S-R	6-0	204	1/15/98	WASHINGTON	.246	20	57	7	14	1	1	5	16	4
						Rochester (AAA)	.311	60	222	32	69	9	35	18	34	10
20	Keibert Ruiz	S-R	6-0	238	7/20/98	WASHINGTON	.229	127	459	46	105	13	57	16	54	3
						Harrisburg (AA)	.111	2	9	0	1	0	0	0	2	1
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
5	CJ Abrams	L-R	6-2	191	10/3/00	WASHINGTON	.246	138	541	79	133	20	65	40	128	31
10	Darren Baker	L-R	5-10	167	2/11/99	WASHINGTON	.500	9	14	1	7	0	0	0	3	0
						Rochester (AAA)	.285	112	435	70	124	0	49	43	91	38
19	Josh Bell	S-R	6-4	261	8/14/92	MIAMI	.239	104	398	38	95	14	49	34	88	0
						ARIZONA	.279	41	140	24	39	5	22	17	32	0
19	Andrés Chaparro	R-R	5-11	200	5/4/99	WASHINGTON	.215	33	121	12	26	4	15	7	24	1
						Rochester (AAA)	.286	10	35	7	10	4	10	8	9	0
						Reno (AAA)	.332	95	367	69	122	19	75	41	73	3
2	Luis Garcia Jr.	L-R	6-2	216	5/16/00	WASHINGTON	.282	140	500	58	141	18	70	27	86	22
38	Trey Lipscomb	R-R	6-3	202	6/14/00	WASHINGTON	.200	61	190	20	38	1	10	16	40	11
						Rochester (AAA)	.283	65	240	31	68	4	35	22	50	8
	Nathaniel Lowe	L-R	6-4	220	7/7/95	TEXAS	.265	140	486	62	129	16	69	71	125	2
26	Nasim Nuñez	S-R	5-9	165	8/18/00	WASHINGTON	.246	51	61	14	15	0	1	12	15	8
8	José Tena	L-R	5-11	195	3/20/01	WASHINGTON	.274	41	157	14	43	3	15	7	39	6
						Rochester (AAA)	.179	10	39	6	7	1	5	4	13	1
						CLEVELAND	.000	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
						Columbus (AAA)	.298	90	369	54	110	17	63	30	102	14
18	Juan Yopez	R-R	6-0	235	2/19/98	WASHINGTON	.283	62	226	32	64	6	26	18	42	2
						Rochester (AAA)	.263	74	274	38	72	11	41	40	45	3
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
17	Alex Call	R-R	5-11	189	9/27/94	WASHINGTON	.343	30	99	15	34	3	14	12	19	5
						Rochester (AAA)	.222	75	252	45	56	11	50	54	60	13
3	Dylan Crews	R-R	5-11	203	2/26/02	WASHINGTON	.218	31	119	12	26	3	8	11	26	12
						Rochester (AAA)	.265	49	211	34	56	8	30	20	42	10
						Harrisburg (AA)	.274	51	186	26	51	5	38	16	50	15
36	Stone Garrett	R-R	6-1	228	11/22/95	WASHINGTON	.600	2	5	2	3	1	3	1	0	0
						Rochester (AAA)	.247	71	235	30	58	3	20	29	83	1
						Harrisburg (AA)	.269	8	26	2	7	0	2	7	7	1
57	Robert Hassell III	L-L	6-1	186	8/15/01	Rochester (AAA)	.125	17	64	5	8	0	3	5	17	3
						Harrisburg (AA)	.271	60	229	33	62	5	21	29	55	12
						Wilmington (A+)	.259	8	27	6	7	0	4	1	4	0
1	Amed Rosario	R-R	6-2	190	11/20/95	TAMPA BAY	.307	76	264	22	81	2	26	7	48	9
						LOS ANGELES NL	.273	5	11	1	3	0	2	1	2	1
						CINCINNATI	.158	22	57	6	9	1	4	1	23	3
29	James Wood	L-R	6-7	234	9/17/02	WASHINGTON	.264	79	295	43	78	9	41	39	97	14
						Rochester (AAA)	.353	52	190	44	67	10	37	40	42	10
30	Jacob Young	R-R	5-11	192	7/27/99	WASHINGTON	.256	150	468	75	120	3	36	30	102	33
						Rochester (AAA)	.214	3	14	1	3	0	0	2	2	1



Chicago CUBS

2025 PREDICTION

1ST

NL EAST

2024 FINISH: 3RD (83-79)

After two straight 83-79 seasons that felt like losing ones, the Cubs entered the winter hunting big game. The centerpiece of their offseason was the acquisition of Kyle Tucker, who now becomes the focus of their offense and of their narrative for a pivotal 2025 campaign. Fans are impatient for a return to the playoffs, and neither they nor the organization will accept another year of treading water without making big changes. To that end, the team also focused on significantly improving their pitching depth, and the Cubs enter the season as a new-look club — despite fairly familiar pillars in the clubhouse and across the roster.

ROTATION

Fronted by a pair of lefties who fall just shy of true ace status, this group has big upside, thanks to a trio of young arms who could assert themselves if the opportunities present themselves. Justin Steele's cutting fastball gets in on the hands of righty batters and sets up a terrific slider, and Shota Imanaga devastates opponents with the combination of his high-rise fastball and a fiercely deceptive splitter. Jameson Taillon and Matthew Boyd provide mid-rotation veteran stability, albeit in different forms. Taillon is always available but never dominant, with a tepid fastball and some vulnerability to home runs but a deep arsenal and good control. Boyd's changeup has come along gorgeously as he's reached his mid-30s, allowing him to more consistently get right-handed batters out than in the past. Javier Assad holds a place at the end of the rotation, but higher-octane arms loom behind him.

BULLPEN

The Cubs are in the lousy habit of not figuring out their relief corps until around Memorial Day each year. They tried to fix that this winter, but they still have unproven arms penciled into key roles. Porter Hodge's combination of one of the game's hardest cutters and a filthy slider makes him a closer-in-training, but his control is spotty. Nate Pearson brought triple-digit velocity potential with him from Toronto in a trade in July, and the Cubs feel good about changes they made to his pitch mix and mound position thereafter. They also love funky arms with unique breaking balls, like righty Tyson Miller and massive southpaw Luke Little. Much could depend on whether their starting staff stays healthy enough to let them avail themselves of talented hurlers who could start if needed, but in short bursts. Daniel Palencia can touch 102 miles per hour with his fastball and has the highest ceiling in the group.

MIDDLE INFIELD

Both Dansby Swanson (sports hernia) and Nico Hoerner (forearm) had surgery to address nagging injuries after the end of the 2024 season, which somewhat explained the underwhelming offense both provided for most of the season. They're still locked in as one of the best defensive double-play combinations



Dansby Swanson

Wrigley Field

Opened: 1914 • Capacity: 41,649
Left: 355' Center: 400' Right: 353'
Tickets: 800-THE-CUBS
mlb.com/CUBS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Most number of pitches seen per plate appearance, 2024

1. Isaac Paredes, Rays/Cubs	4.43
2. Rhys Hoskins, Brewers	4.31
3. Matt Olson, Braves	4.30
4. Seiya Suzuki, Cubs	4.29
5. Justin Turner, Blue Jays/Mariners	4.28

GARY A. VASQUEZ-IMAGN IMAGES

in baseball for at least two more years, and their glove work remains impressive. For each, the challenge is to consistently generate the power of which they appear to be capable because neither has delivered that pop for full seasons in either 2023 or 2024.

CORNERS

The Cubs were thrilled with the progress of rookie Michael Busch in 2024, both in the batter's box and at first base. There's a lot of swing-and-miss in his game, but he makes up for it with good power and the ability to hit the ball solidly to all fields. He also accepts plenty of walks, making him a well-rounded offensive contributor. After trading midseason acquisition Isaac Paredes in order to land Tucker, Chicago now hopes Matt Shaw can be to

their 2025 team what Busch was to the 2024 version. Shaw was the 13th overall pick in the 2023 MLB Draft and has shown facility with pro and international competitive pitching, all while demonstrating good enough defense to leave the franchise confident in him at the hot corner.

OUTFIELD

Tucker is one of the 10 best hitters in baseball, with a .280/.362/.527 slash line over the past four seasons and a dazzling blend of pure hitting ability, power and speed. He takes over right field, alongside sophomore defensive ace Pete Crow-Armstrong (who also emerged as a power-speed threat late in 2024, albeit with poor plate discipline) in center and the metronomically consistent, switch-hitting, Gold Glove-winning Ian Happ in left. Happ's skill set was stretched by the outsized offensive role the team needed him to play before acquiring Tucker, but he profiles as a superb leadoff hitter in a lineup with better thunder behind him.

CATCHING

Young Panamanian Miguel Amaya made a major mechanical change midway through 2024, ditching his leg kick and drastically improving his offensive output. He's well-liked by pitchers, and the Cubs hope to build their catching plan around him, but after seeing him go through massive slumps and struggle to control the running game over his first full season, they brought in veteran part-timer Carson Kelly as a backup backstop. Kelly is one of the game's most accurate throwers and has good punch in his bat, especially against left-handed pitchers.

DH/BENCH

Though not happy about the role, Seiya Suzuki thrived after being shifted into full-time DH duty for the final six weeks of 2024. One of the game's most well-rounded hitters, Suzuki is patient, hits the ball hard and uses the whole



Shota Imanaga

PROJECTED LINEUP

LINEUP

LF	Ian Happ (S)
RF	Kyle Tucker (L)
DH	Seiya Suzuki (R)
1B	Michael Busch (L)
SS	Dansby Swanson (R)
3B	Matt Shaw (R)
2B	Nico Hoerner (R)
CF	Pete Crow-Armstrong (L)
C	Miguel Amaya (R)

BENCH

C	Carson Kelly (R)
UTIL	Gage Workman (L)
OF	Alexander Canario (R)
UTIL	Vidal Bruján (S)

ROTATION

LHP	Shota Imanaga
LHP	Justin Steele
RHP	Jameson Taillon
LHP	Matthew Boyd
RHP	Javier Assad

BULLPEN

RHP	Porter Hodge (C)
RHP	Nate Pearson
RHP	Tyson Miller
LHP	Luke Little
RHP	Eli Morgan
RHP	Julian Merryweather
RHP	Ben Brown
RHP	Daniel Palencia

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE CUBS "The Cubs should have won the division last year, and after trading for Kyle Tucker and signing Matthew Boyd, I think this time they will. Another year for Craig Counsell with this group can only help. With defenders like Nico Hoerner, Pete Crow-Armstrong and Ian Happ, they won't beat themselves, and their rotation should keep them in every game — they're not the hardest-throwing group, but there's a lot to like about Justin Steele, Shota Imanaga, Jameson Taillon, Javier Assad and Boyd. If everybody plays the way they're capable of playing, this team is the best bet in the division to win 90 games."

field. His biggest difficulties have been playing defense and staying healthy, and if playing less defense helps keep him healthy, he'll end up liking his job much more. He might often rotate into the outfield corners, too, to keep Happ and Tucker fresh. The rest of the Cubs' bench is a patchwork, but they boosted the group's upside by taking toolsy left-hitting utilityman Gage Workman in December's Rule 5 Draft.

MANAGEMENT

No team in the league has invested more in the man atop their dugout steps. The Cubs swooped in and stole Craig Counsell from their rivals and his hometown team, the Milwaukee Brewers, by guaranteeing him \$40 million over five years in Nov. 2023. One year in, that feels like a very rich gamble that has yet to pay off, but Counsell's processes as an in-game decision-maker and between-games massager of egos and ideas are as well-regarded as any in MLB. The 2025 campaign will be his first with a coaching staff largely of his own creation, and with a roster slightly remade to suit his tastes. The man remaking that roster, president of baseball operations Jed Hoyer, is perhaps the bigger story, since his contract is up after 2025 and won't be renewed or extended if the team doesn't reach the postseason.

FINAL ANALYSIS

A 103-win juggernaut, they are not. This team is not yet back to its most glorious form, after years of downward drift in the wake of their drought-busting 2016 World Series run. However, after running in place for the first two years of their renewed efforts to win, they've made enough bold changes to give themselves a legitimate chance to win the NL Central. If they do so, it will be their first division crown since 2017, save the COVID-shortened 2020, and a new tone will be set in Wrigleyville.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

A BIT OF HEALING The biggest off-field story of the year for Chicago came near the holidays, when estranged franchise legend Sammy Sosa issued a statement tacitly acknowledging his use of performance-enhancing drugs during his playing career — in response to which the team finally welcomed back the record-breaking ex-slugger. It wasn't quite the cathartic reunion for which many fans have waited, but the Cubs and the player who made them massively popular again in the late 1990s and early 2000s are back in business together.

A HIDDEN HOTBED? Panama is enjoying a moment of rising prominence as a source of talent. Cubs catcher Miguel Amaya is one of eight Panama natives to debut in MLB since 2020, and the 18 players to reach the big leagues since 2015 are more than did so over the previous 17 seasons.

PITCHER WEATHER Even casual fans noticed that the famous winds of Wrigley Field seemed to be blowing in more often than usual in 2024. Indeed, thanks to a combination of strange wind patterns and lower temperatures at certain junctures of the season, the Cubs' home park played as one of the toughest in baseball for hitters. That knowledge shaped the way the front office attacked their offseason, as they focused more on pitching than one might expect from a team with the surface-level numbers they posted.

STILL WAITING Over the past several years, the Cubs have fallen on the wrong side of the divide between big spenders and tightwads. The Ricketts family has shown no inclination to spend close to \$300 million per season on payroll, as the Yankees, Dodgers, Mets and Phillies are doing, and the team still hasn't given out a contract richer than the \$184 million pact they struck with Jason Heyward almost a decade ago. Being outspent forces them to be perfect in other areas, but they don't seem to think they should be as aggressive as New York or Los Angeles teams, regardless of the competitive implications.

Schedule

HOME

AWAY

TOKYO SERIES

MARCH & APRIL

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		18 LAD	19 LAD	27 ARI	28 ARI	29 ARI
30 ARI	31 A's	1 A's	2 A's	3	4 SD	5 SD
6 SD	7 TEX	8 TEX	9 TEX	10	11 LAD	12 LAD
13 LAD	14 SD	15 SD	16 SD	17	18 ARI	19 ARI
20 ARI	21	22 LAD	23 LAD	24	25 PHI	26 PHI
27 PHI	28	29 PIT	30 PIT			

MAY

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 PIT	2 MIL	3 MIL
4 MIL	5 SF	6 SF	7 SF	8	9 NYM	10 NYM
11 NYM	12 MIA	13 MIA	14 MIA	15	16 CWS	17 CWS
18 CWS	19 MIA	20 MIA	21 MIA	22	23 CIN	24 CIN
25 CIN	26 COL	27 COL	28 COL	29	30 CIN	31 CIN

JUNE

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 CIN	2	3 WAS	4 WAS	5 WAS	6 DET	7 DET
8 DET	9 PHI	10 PHI	11 PHI	12 PIT	13 PIT	14 PIT
15 PIT	16	17 MIL	18 MIL	19 MIL	20 SEA	21 SEA
22 SEA	23 STL	24 STL	25 STL	26 STL	27 HOU	28 HOU
29 HOU	30					

JULY

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 CLE	2 CLE	3 CLE	4 STL	5 STL
6 STL	7	8 MIN	9 MIN	10 MIN	11 NYY	12 NYY
13 NYY	14	ALL-STAR BREAK			18 BOS	19 BOS
20 BOS	21 KC	22 KC	23 KC	24	25 CWS	26 CWS
27 CWS	28 MIL	29 MIL	30 MIL	31		

AUGUST

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 BAL	2 BAL
3 BAL	4 CIN	5 CIN	6 CIN	7	8 STL	9 STL
10 STL	11	12 TOR	13 TOR	14 TOR	15 PIT	16 PIT
17 PIT	18 MIL	19 MIL	20 MIL	21 MIL	22 LAA	23 LAA
24 LAA	25	26 SF	27 SF	28 SF	29 COL	30 COL
31 COL						

SEPTEMBER

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 ATL	2 ATL	3 ATL	4	5 WAS	6 WAS
7 WAS	8 ATL	9 ATL	10 ATL	11	12 TB	13 TB
14 TB	15 PIT	16 PIT	17 PIT	18 CIN	19 CIN	20 CIN
21 CIN	22	23 NYM	24 NYM	25 NYM	26 STL	27 STL
28 STL	29	30				

STATISTICIAN

16 Fielding Run Value (FRV) for Cubs center fielder Pete Crow-Armstrong, tied for second in MLB. That was despite Crow-Armstrong playing just 123 games.

4.0 Percentage of batters faced by Japanese import Shota Imanaga to draw walks, fourth-best among pitchers with at least 100 innings pitched.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



1. Matt Shaw, IF (23) Promising bad should slot right into the lineup early in 2025.

- 2. Kevin Alcántara, OF (22)** The highest ceiling in the system. A potential five-tool center fielder.
- 3. Cade Horton, RHP (23)** His slider and sheer velocity are a deadly combination.
- 4. Moises Ballesteros, C (21)** Can flat-out hit, and if he catches even part-time, he could be a star.
- 5. Brandon Birdsell, RHP (25)** Upside a hair lower than Horton's, but he's just as close to readiness.
- 6. James Triantos, UTIL (22)** Could be a versatile part of a big-league lineup by mid-2025.
- 7. Owen Caissie, RF (22)** Unlike so many of his fellow prospects, his calling card is his power.
- 8. Jefferson Rojas, SS (19)** Plus bat speed has yet to translate into results at High-A.
- 9. Jaxon Wiggins, RHP (23)** His fastball and slider are the stuff aces are made of.
- 10. Jack Neely, RHP (24)** Neely has a high-octane fastball-slider mix. Reached the majors in 2024.

Cubs Roster

President, Baseball Operations: Jed Hoyer • Manager: Craig Counsell • Coaches: Quintin Berry (third base), Juan Cabreja (asst. hitting), Ryan Flaherty (bench), Tommy Hottovy (pitching), Casey Jacobson (asst. pitching), Jose Javier (first base), Dustin Kelly (hitting), John Mallee (asst. hitting), Jonathan Mota (major league), Alex Smith (major league strategy), Mark Strittmatter (bullpen)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
82	Michael Arias	R-R	6-0	155	11/15/01	Iowa (AAA)	3-2	5.45	33	0	4	36.1	40	36	46	
						Tennessee (AA)	3-0	3.75	16	0	1	24.0	24	12	26	
72	Javier Assad	R-R	6-1	200	7/30/97	CHICAGO NL	7-6	3.73	29	29	0	147.0	143	63	124	
48	Matthew Boyd	L-L	6-3	223	2/2/91	CLEVELAND	2-2	2.72	8	8	0	39.2	32	13	46	
						Columbus (AAA)	0-0	0.93	2	2	0	9.2	3	0	12	
						Akron (AA)	1-0	1.00	2	2	0	9.0	6	1	8	
						ACL Guardians (R)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	3.0	3	1	7	
32	Ben Brown	R-R	6-6	210	9/9/99	CHICAGO NL	1-3	3.58	15	8	0	55.1	41	19	64	
63	Matt Festa	R-R	6-1	195	3/11/93	TEXAS	6-0	4.37	18	0	0	22.2	17	7	23	
						Round Rock (AAA)	1-0	1.04	6	0	1	8.2	6	3	13	
						NEW YORK NL	0-1	36.00	1	0	0	1.0	4	1	1	
						Syracuse (AAA)	1-0	1.76	11	0	0	15.1	11	3	19	
						El Paso (AAA)	0-1	4.50	16	0	1	16.0	18	7	16	
37	Porter Hodge	R-R	6-4	230	2/21/01	CHICAGO NL	3-1	1.88	39	0	9	43.0	19	19	52	
						Iowa (AAA)	1-1	5.74	13	0	0	15.2	18	12	20	
						Tennessee (AA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	4.0	1	1	8	
46	Gavin Hollowell	R-R	6-7	215	11/4/97	CHICAGO NL	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.1	2	0	1	
						Iowa (AAA)	1-1	1.93	7	0	0	9.1	4	4	15	
						Reno (AAA)	1-1	3.63	18	0	0	17.1	15	13	24	
						Albuquerque (AAA)	0-0	16.62	6	0	0	4.1	6	4	6	
						ACL Rockies (R)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	2.0	0	1	3	
18	Shota Imanaga	L-L	5-10	175	9/1/93	CHICAGO NL	15-3	2.91	29	29	0	173.1	149	28	174	
45	Caleb Kilian	R-R	6-4	180	6/2/97	CHICAGO NL	0-1	4.22	2	1	0	10.2	11	6	7	
						Iowa (AAA)	2-0	3.22	13	7	0	44.2	37	14	38	
						South Bend (A+)	0-0	9.00	3	0	0	4.0	4	3	5	
43	Luke Little	L-L	6-8	220	8/30/00	CHICAGO NL	3-1	3.46	30	1	0	26.0	15	18	28	
						Iowa (AAA)	0-0	4.05	4	0	1	6.2	3	7	7	
66	Julian Merryweather	R-R	6-4	215	10/14/91	CHICAGO NL	1-1	6.60	15	0	0	15.0	18	9	14	
						Iowa (AAA)	2-0	1.59	5	0	0	5.2	6	1	8	
						ACL Cubs (R)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	0	0	
49	Tyson Miller	R-R	6-5	220	7/29/95	CHICAGO NL	5-1	2.15	49	0	1	50.1	31	10	42	
						SEATTLE	0-0	3.09	9	0	0	11.2	8	1	12	
						Tacoma (AAA)	0-0	2.25	4	0	0	4.0	3	2	6	
33	Eli Morgan	R-R	5-10	190	5/13/96	CLEVELAND	3-0	1.93	32	0	0	42.0	30	11	34	
						Columbus (AAA)	0-0	2.70	14	0	0	16.2	13	8	16	
47	Jack Neely	R-R	6-8	245	6/5/00	CHICAGO NL	0-0	9.00	6	0	0	6.0	8	2	7	
						Iowa (AAA)	0-0	3.12	8	0	3	8.2	9	2	16	
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	1-1	3.38	9	0	0	10.2	10	4	12	
						Somerset (AA)	0-0	2.61	22	0	6	31.0	23	12	51	
48	Daniel Palencia	R-R	5-11	160	2/5/00	CHICAGO NL	0-1	6.14	10	0	1	14.2	14	12	16	
						Iowa (AAA)	2-1	4.85	33	1	5	39.0	31	22	68	
56	Nate Pearson	R-R	6-6	255	8/20/96	CHICAGO NL	2-1	2.73	19	1	0	26.1	22	4	23	
						TORONTO	0-1	5.63	41	0	2	40.0	45	17	51	
	Cody Poteet	R-R	6-1	190	7/30/94	NEW YORK AL	3-0	2.22	5	4	0	24.1	18	8	16	
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	3-0	3.92	10	10	0	43.2	39	15	49	
						Somerset (AA)	0-0	0.96	3	3	0	9.1	5	1	11	
39	Ethan Roberts	R-R	5-10	180	7/4/97	CHICAGO NL	1-1	3.71	21	0	0	26.2	31	10	26	
						Iowa (AAA)	0-0	1.65	14	0	0	16.1	9	7	21	
						Tennessee (AA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	0.2	0	2	0	
						ACL Cubs (R)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	0	0	
35	Justin Steele	L-L	6-2	205	7/11/95	CHICAGO NL	5-5	3.07	24	24	0	134.2	111	37	135	
						Iowa (AAA)	0-0	8.10	1	1	0	3.1	6	1	4	
50	Jameson Taillon	R-R	6-5	230	11/18/91	CHICAGO NL	12-8	3.27	28	28	0	165.1	154	33	125	
						Iowa (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	3.2	3	1	4	
						Tennessee (AA)	0-1	10.13	1	1	0	2.2	6	1	4	
56	Caleb Thielbar	R-L	6-0	205	1/31/87	MINNESOTA	2-4	5.32	59	0	3	47.1	50	24	53	
						St. Paul (AAA)	1-0	3.00	2	0	0	3.0	2	1	5	
71	Keegan Thompson	R-R	6-1	210	3/13/95	CHICAGO NL	2-1	2.67	24	0	2	30.1	19	18	36	
						Iowa (AAA)	2-1	2.96	20	0	1	27.1	15	10	38	
36	Jordan Wicks	L-L	6-3	220	9/1/99	CHICAGO NL	2-4	5.48	11	10	0	46.0	55	20	42	
						Iowa (AAA)	0-4	5.57	7	7	0	21.0	18	8	24	
	Rob Zastryzny	R-L	6-3	205	3/26/92	MILWAUKEE	1-0	1.17	9	3	0	7.2	4	1	5	
						Nashville (AAA)	4-0	3.03	30	0	2	29.2	20	11	39	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
9	Miguel Amaya	R-R	6-0	230	3/9/99	CHICAGO NL	.232	117	328	32	76	8	47	23	62	0
18	Carson Kelly	R-R	6-2	212	7/14/94	DETROIT	.240	60	179	21	43	7	29	17	40	0
						TEXAS	.235	31	102	11	24	2	8	8	15	0
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
17	Vidal Bruján	S-R	5-10	180	2/9/98	MIAMI	.222	102	248	32	55	2	16	25	54	5
						Jacksonville (AAA)	.143	2	7	1	1	1	3	2	1	0
29	Michael Busch	L-R	6-1	210	11/9/97	CHICAGO NL	.248	152	496	73	123	21	65	63	162	2
	Benjamin Cowles	R-R	6-0	180	2/15/00	Tennessee (AA)	.077	4	13	2	1	0	0	2	3	0
						Somerset (AA)	.294	88	326	52	96	9	51	39	67	14
2	Nico Hoerner	R-R	6-1	200	5/13/97	CHICAGO NL	.273	151	582	86	159	7	48	44	66	31
7	Dansby Swanson	R-R	6-1	190	2/11/94	CHICAGO NL	.242	149	534	82	129	16	66	54	144	19
12	Luis Vazquez	R-R	6-0	165	10/10/99	CHICAGO NL	.083	11	12	2	1	0	1	0	6	0
						Iowa (AAA)	.263	64	236	33	62	8	24	25	60	1
	Gage Workman	L-R	6-4	202	10/24/99	Erie (AA)	.280	126	483	85	135	18	89	65	153	30
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
13	Kevin Alcántara	R-R	6-6	188	7/12/02	CHICAGO NL	.100	3	10	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
						Iowa (AAA)	.292	35	130	23	38	5	22	17	43	7
						Tennessee (AA)	.271	76	291	38	79	9	39	30	80	7
	Owen Caissie	L-R	6-3	190	7/8/02	Iowa (AAA)	.278	127	472	69	131	19	75	71	156	11
4	Alexander Canario	R-R	5-11	165	5/7/00	CHICAGO NL	.280	15	25	4	7	1	2	2	11	1
						Iowa (AAA)	.243	64	247	46	60	18	47	32	86	5
52	Pete Crow-Armstrong	L-L	5-11	184	3/25/02	CHICAGO NL	.237	123	372	46	88	10	47	21	98	27
						Iowa (AAA)	.255	26	110	22	28	5	14	6	32	10
8	Ian Happ	S-R	6-0	205	8/12/94	CHICAGO NL	.243	153	569	89	138	25	86	80	168	13
27	Seiya Suzuki	R-R	5-11	182	8/18/94	CHICAGO NL	.283	132	512	74	145	21	73	63	160	16
						Iowa (AAA)	.400	2	5	2	2	0	0	1	1	1
30	Kyle Tucker	L-R	6-4	212	1/17/97	HOUSTON	.289	78	277	56	80	23	49	56	54	11

CODY SCANLAN/THE REGISTER



Cincinnati REDS

2025 PREDICTION

3RD

NL CENTRAL

2024 FINISH: 4TH (77-85)

The Reds entered the 2024 season coming off an unexpectedly strong 82-80 mark in 2023. With a flotilla of highly rated prospects graduating to the majors, they were considered a candidate to compete for a postseason berth. Instead, a combination of injuries and ineffectiveness led to a dismal May (a 9-18 record) and ultimately a fourth-place finish that cost manager David Bell his job. The same talented youngsters return, though, and the addition of future Hall of Fame manager Terry Francona has raised hopes.

ROTATION

The challenge for Reds starters is keeping them on the field; the top three of Hunter Greene (39 days on the IL with elbow soreness last year), Andrew Abbott (missed the last 42 days with a shoulder strain) and Nick Lodolo (four separate IL stints totaling 84 days) have yet to qualify for the ERA title (162 innings). The key offseason addition is Brady Singer, acquired in a trade with the Royals. He's coming off a 9-13 season with Kansas City but a 3.71 ERA and, importantly, 32 starts and no days missed on the injured list. Greene, with a blazing fastball and a 2.75 ERA last year, is the staff ace, and Singer is a reliable No. 2. Lefties Abbott and Lodolo will be in the rotation if healthy. Nick Martinez, a superb swingman who threw 142.1 innings with a 3.10 ERA between 16 starts and 26 relief appearances, accepted the Reds' qualifying offer and will continue in his starter/reliever role. The team will likely break camp with either Carson Spiers or Graham Ashcraft, each of whom had an ERA north of 5.00, in the rotation. But they could quickly be shoved aside by 2023 first-round draft pick Rhett Lowder, who had a 1.17 ERA in six late-season starts for the Reds.

BULLPEN

Bell's bullpen management was a source of frustration for Reds fans. But it's not like he was blessed with a lot of great options. Closer Alexis Díaz had 28 saves but a 3.99 ERA, four blown saves and a worrying 1.8 K/BB ratio, down from 2.4 in the two prior years. (NL relievers averaged 2.6.) Brent Suter was also effective (3.15 ERA), but he's 35, and Martinez is 34. Two other relievers, Sam Moll and Emilio Pagán, are 33. The Reds' top pitching prospects are mostly not yet MLB-ready, so the team will be hoping for good health.

MIDDLE INFIELD

Elly De La Cruz is arguably the most electrifying player in baseball. His bat speed and average exit velocity are among the best in the game. At shortstop, his range and arm strength are elite. His sprint speed scores are in the top percentile. There are plenty of rough edges, though: He led the majors in times caught stealing, strikeouts and errors. But he's only 23 and all by himself provides a reason to watch the Reds. At second, Matt McLain, who finished fifth in the 2023 Rookie of the Year vote, missed the 2024 season with a torn labrum, but



Elly De La Cruz

Great American Ball Park

Opened: 2003 • Capacity: 43,500
Left: 328' Center: 404' Right: 325'
Tickets: 877-647-7337
mlb.com/REDS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Largest drop in hard-hit rate
(min. 100 IP), 2023-24

1. Hunter Brown, Astros	13.6
2. Hunter Greene, Reds	12.2
3. Andrew Abbott, Reds	9.5
4. Brady Singer, Royals	6.8
5. Kenta Maeda, Tigers	6.2

his return made last year's second baseman, Jonathan India, expendable; India was sent to Kansas City in exchange for Singer. McLain delivers above-average offense to the keystone. The Reds traded for Gavin Lux in January. He played second for the Dodgers last year and doesn't have an ideal arm for third, but he provides a left-handed bat and a backup for McLain.

CORNERS

Signing Jeimer Candelario, a then-30-year old corner infielder, to a three-year deal last winter raised eyebrows, but a season-ending wrist injury in May to first baseman Christian Encarnacion-Strand and a drug suspension for third baseman Noelvi Marte resulted in regular play for Candelario until a broken toe ended his season in August.

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

CF	TJ Friedl (L)
SS	Elly De La Cruz (S)
1B	C. Encarnacion-Strand (R)
LF	Spencer Steer (R)
C	Tyler Stephenson (R)
2B	Matt McLain (R)
DH	Jeimer Candelario (S)
RF	Jake Fraley (L)
3B	Noelvi Marte (R)

■ BENCH

C	Jose Trevino (R)
INF	Santiago Espinal (R)
INF	Gavin Lux (L)
OF	Will Benson (L)

■ ROTATION

RHP	Hunter Greene
RHP	Brady Singer
LHP	Andrew Abbott
RHP	Nick Martinez
LHP	Nick Lodolo

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Alexis Díaz (C)
RHP	Emilio Pagán
LHP	Brent Suter
LHP	Sam Moll
RHP	Tony Santillan
RHP	Yosver Zulueta
RHP	Carson Spiers
RHP	Casey Legumina

Encarnacion-Strand and Marte were both ineffective, but their limited play earns them a mulligan. In 2023, Encarnacion-Strand slugged .477, and Marte had an .822 OPS in a 35-game audition in Cincinnati. They are both young enough (25 and 23, respectively) that a return to their 2023 form isn't an unreasonable hope.

OUTFIELD

The Reds haven't addressed their outfield, whose .682 OPS was third-worst in the league in 2024. Due to injury and ineffectiveness, Will Benson's 102 games started were the most of the group. Spencer Steer, a converted infielder who led the club with 92 RBIs, is the incumbent in left; he can help out in the infield and has both power (20 homers last year) and speed (25 stolen bases in 28 attempts). TJ Friedl had another injury-filled year and slashed only .226/.310/.380 between injured list assignments for a broken wrist, broken thumb and strained hamstring. He'll play center when not hurt. In right field, Jake Fraley hits for average (.277 last year) but with little power (.386 slugging percentage). Benson has some thump but far too much swing-and-miss, striking out in 40 percent of his plate appearances. Lux played left field for the Dodgers in 2022, and McLain played in center in the Arizona Fall League, so either could be in the mix here.

CATCHING

Tyler Stephenson is coming off a fine year, with a .782 OPS, 19 homers and no trips to the injured list. He grades out as a below-average pitch framer and



Hunter Greene

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE REDS "They're moving in the right direction; you know they are, or Terry Francona wouldn't have gone there. The Reds have been a team that seemed to just roll out and play, but they'll be well-prepared with a winning culture under Francona. Most importantly, though, is that this will be the year those pitchers put it all together. Hunter Greene did it last year — he's a frontline All-Star. Nick Lodolo has nasty late life, and Brady Singer and Andrew Abbott are useful mid-rotation guys who know what they're doing. They missed Matt McLain a lot last season, but he should be back from his shoulder surgery. Spencer Steer has that RBI gene and a good blend of power and speed. Tyler Stephenson can really hit, and he's probably not as bad as it seems at throwing out runners because that's not a strength of this pitching staff. Elly De La Cruz reminds me of a young Darryl Strawberry — fast-twitch muscles and you're like: 'Boom! He just hit it 450 feet.' The sky's the limit for De La Cruz, and he seems like he really cares. He's got a ton of strikeouts, but he's not up there hacking without a plan."

caught only 16 percent of baserunners attempting to steal. The Reds needed a strong defensive backup, and got one in Jose Trevino, acquired in a trade with the Yankees. He can't match Stephenson on offense but is an outstanding defender.

DH/BENCH

The Reds passed the DH role around last season — Candelario's 32 starts led the team — and are poised to do the same this year, with Candelario likely getting the most starts again despite a poor performance in the role (.208/.257/.392) last year. Santiago Espinal has played every position but catcher and first base in his nine-year professional career and will back up all the infield positions. Stuart Fairchild will compete for a similar role in the outfield. Neither adds much with his bat. Cooper Bowman, a Rule 5 pickup from the A's, projects as a utility player if he makes the club.

MANAGEMENT

Francona left the Guardians after the 2023 season due to health problems, and it was assumed that he'd spend the next five years enjoying retirement before his induction ceremony in Cooperstown. Instead, he signed with Reds just 12 days after Bell was let go. His addition has definitely generated the most buzz for the team in an otherwise quiet offseason. It also provided cover for president of baseball operations Nick Krall and owner Bob Castellini, whose failure to make meaningful additions to the promising 2023 team was as much a reason for the Reds' 2024 struggles as anything Bell did.

FINAL ANALYSIS

The National League Central is a winnable division. None of the five has an unlimited budget, and no team from the division has made it to the NLCS since before the pandemic. For the Reds to play in the postseason for the first time 2013 (not counting 2020), though, will require not just better health from a number of players but also a return to form for several young batters. Francona's a great leader, but his late-1990s Phillies teams had a losing record four straight seasons. Ownership hasn't added the complementary players around the Reds' promising young core. Most of the top prospects are still in the low minors. There's only so much a manager, even a great one, can do.

BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

I WANT MY REDS TV With the bankruptcy of Diamond Sports Group, the parent company of Bally Sports Ohio which televised the team, the Reds announced the end of their joint venture with Diamond. Reds games will be produced and distributed by Major League Baseball. For fans, Reds games will remain on cable and satellite TV while also being available for streaming from MLB with no blackouts. For the team, though, the cancellation of the contract likely means a sharp reduction from the estimated \$60 million the club received from Diamond last year.

TWO GREATS EXIT Last August 21, Joey Votto announced his retirement from baseball. He played his entire MLB career with the Reds, finishing with a .920 OPS, second in franchise history to Frank Robinson's .943. A little over a month later, Pete Rose passed away at 83. Votto was a great player on the field and a delight off of it. He's a good bet for the Hall of Fame. By contrast, the Hit King's transgressions when not in uniform barred him from enshrinement in Cooperstown.

PUTTING THE BAND BACK TOGETHER Terry Francona added Brad Mills as bench coach and Chris Valaika as hitting coach. Valaika (a Reds player in 2010-11) was Cleveland's hitting coach the past three seasons, including Francona's last two. Mills is a longtime Francona associate, having served with him in Philadelphia, Boston and Cleveland. The Reds are hopeful that they can repeat the success of the team in northern Ohio.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27 SF	28	29 SF
30 SF	31 TEX	1 TEX	2 TEX	3 MIL	4 MIL	5 MIL
6 MIL	7 SF	8 SF	9 SF	10	11 PIT	12 PIT
13 PIT	14	15 SEA	16 SEA	17 SEA	18 BAL	19 BAL
20 BAL	21 MIA	22 MIA	23 MIA	24	25 COL	26 COL
27 COL	28 STL	29 STL	30 STL			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 STL	2 WAS	3 WAS
4 WAS	5 ATL	6 ATL	7 ATL	8 ATL	9 HOU	10 HOU
11 HOU	12	13 CWS	14 CWS	15 CWS	16 CLE	17 CLE
18 CLE	19 PIT	20 PIT	21 PIT	22	23 CHC	24 CHC
25 CHC	26 KC	27 KC	28 KC	29	30 CHC	31 CHC
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 CHC	2 MIL	3 MIL	4 MIL	5	6 ARZ	7 ARZ
8 ARZ	9 CLE	10 CLE	11 CLE	12	13 DET	14 DET
15 DET	16	17 MIN	18 MIN	19 MIN	20 STL	21 STL
22 STL	23 NYY	24 NYY	25 NYY	26	27 SD	28 SD
29 SD	30 BOS					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 BOS	2 BOS	3	4 PHI	5 PHI
6 PHI	7 MIA	8 MIA	9 MIA	10 MIA	11 COL	12 COL
13 COL	14	15	16	17	18 NYM	19 NYM
20 NYM	21 WAS	22 WAS	23 WAS	24	25 TB	26 TB
27 TB	28 LAD	29 LAD	30 LAD	31 ATL		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 ATL	2 ATL
3	4 CHC	5 CHC	6 CHC	7 PIT	8 PIT	9 PIT
10 PIT	11 PHI	12 PHI	13 PHI	14	15 MIL	16 MIL
17 MIL	18 LAA	19 LAA	20 LAA	21	22 ARI	23 ARI
24 ARI	25 LAD	26 LAD	27 LAD	28	29 STL	30 STL
31 STL						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 TOR	2 TOR	3 TOR	4	5 NYM	6 NYM
7 NYM	8 SD	9 SD	10 SD	11	12 A's	13 A's
14 A's	15 STL	16 STL	17 STL	18 CHC	19 CHC	20 CHC
21 CHC	22	23 PIT	24 PIT	25 PIT	26 MIL	27 MIL
28 MIL	29	30				

STATISTICIAN

67/218 The MLB-leading stolen base and strikeout totals by Elly De La Cruz, the first player to lead the majors in both categories.

22 The number of times Reds pitchers were put on the injured list in 2024, the fourth-highest total in the league.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



- **1. Rhett Lowder, RHP (23)** Stuff isn't overwhelming, but his command makes up for it.
- **2. Chase Burns, RHP (22)** Has outstanding stuff, featuring a scary fastball/slider combo.
- **3. Chase Petty, RHP (21)** He throws five pitches, all of them hard.
- **4. Edwin Arroyo, SS (21)** A smooth fielder who can move to second or third and provide an average bat with gap power.
- **5. Cam Collier, 3B (20)** His ultimate position is likely 1B or DH, but his power bat will play.
- **6. Alfredo Duno, C (19)** Missed much of last year, but his power and throwing arm are promising.
- **7. Sal Stewart, 2B/3B (21)** Stewart's advanced hit tools offset a so-so glove.
- **8. Tyson Lewis, SS (19)** He has the athleticism and speed for several positions.
- **9. Sammy Stafura, SS (20)** He led Single-A Daytona with a .374 OBP and 27 steals.
- **10. Ricardo Cabrera, IF (20)** He had one of the better bats at Daytona last year.

Reds Roster

President of Baseball Operations: Nick Krall • Manager: Terry Francona • Coaches: Kyle Arnsberg (major league/coordinator of advance scouting), Freddie Benavides (bench/field coordinator), Collin Cowgill (first base), J.R. House (third base), Derek Johnson (pitching), Brad Mills (bench), Mike Napoli (staff assistant), Alex Pelaez (asst. hitting), Will Remillard (asst. hitting), Matt Tracy (bullpen), Chris Valaika (hitting)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO					
41	Andrew Abbott	L-L	6-0	192	6/1/99	CINCINNATI	10-10	3.72	25	25	0	138.0	127	52	114					
39	Julian Aguiar	L-R	6-3	180	6/4/01	CINCINNATI	2-1	6.25	7	7	0	31.2	30	12	19					
						Louisville (AAA)	3-1	4.40	9	9	0	47.0	43	16	41					
						Chattanooga (AA)	2-3	3.38	13	13	0	69.1	69	13	54					
23	Graham Ashcraft	L-R	6-2	248	2/11/98	CINCINNATI	5-5	5.24	15	15	0	77.1	89	27	57					
						Louisville (AAA)	1-1	3.00	2	2	0	12.0	10	2	12					
						Roansy Contreras	R-R	6-1	205	11/7/99	PITTSBURGH	1-0	4.41	12	0	0	16.1	19	8	16
						LOS ANGELES AL	1-4	4.33	37	3	2	52.0	44	23	40					
43	Alexis Díaz	R-R	6-2	224	9/28/96	CINCINNATI	2-5	3.99	60	0	28	56.1	42	31	55					
21	Hunter Greene	R-R	6-5	242	8/6/99	CINCINNATI	9-5	2.75	26	26	0	150.1	96	57	169					
65	Casey Legumina	R-R	6-2	195	6/19/97	CINCINNATI	0-0	8.68	6	0	0	9.1	15	2	7					
						Louisville (AAA)	6-2	3.24	39	0	0	58.1	46	18	57					
40	Nick Lodolo	L-L	6-6	216	2/5/98	CINCINNATI	9-6	4.76	21	21	0	115.1	101	37	122					
						Louisville (AAA)	0-2	5.87	2	2	0	7.2	7	3	10					
81	Rhett Lowder	R-R	6-2	200	3/8/02	CINCINNATI	2-2	1.17	6	6	0	30.2	25	14	22					
						Louisville (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	6.0	3	0	7					
						Chattanooga (AA)	4-4	4.31	16	16	0	77.1	80	18	77					
						Dayton (A+)	2-0	2.49	5	5	0	25.1	18	6	29					
28	Nick Martinez	L-R	6-1	200	8/5/90	CINCINNATI	10-7	3.10	42	16	0	142.1	128	18	116					
						Luis Mey	R-R	6-5	235	6/24/01	Chattanooga (AA)	0-3	4.15	19	0	1	26.0	23	19	27
						Dayton (A+)	2-2	2.79	21	0	8	29.0	15	24	36					
50	Sam Moll	L-L	5-9	190	1/3/92	CINCINNATI	3-2	3.35	48	0	0	37.2	27	14	38					
						Louisville (AAA)	1-2	6.48	9	0	1	8.1	11	3	9					
15	Emilio Pagán	L-R	6-2	208	5/7/91	CINCINNATI	4-5	4.50	38	1	1	38.0	40	11	44					
						Louisville (AAA)	0-0	6.00	3	0	1	3.0	2	0	3					
34	Connor Phillips	R-R	6-2	209	5/4/01	Louisville (AAA)	3-9	8.01	19	19	0	78.2	99	60	77					
72	Lyon Richardson	S-R	6-2	207	1/18/00	CINCINNATI	0-0	27.00	1	0	0	0.2	2	1	1					
						Louisville (AAA)	1-7	4.67	25	19	0	98.1	90	59	93					
64	Tony Santillan	R-R	6-3	285	4/15/97	CINCINNATI	3-3	3.00	29	1	0	30.0	21	9	46					
						Louisville (AAA)	2-4	3.49	38	0	16	38.2	32	23	53					
51	Brady Singer	R-R	6-5	215	8/4/96	KANSAS CITY	9-13	3.71	32	32	0	179.2	175	54	170					
68	Carson Spiers	R-R	6-3	205	11/11/97	CINCINNATI	5-7	5.46	22	10	0	90.2	112	27	80					
						Louisville (AAA)	3-1	2.51	9	8	0	46.2	34	15	49					
31	Brent Suter	L-L	6-4	213	8/29/89	CINCINNATI	1-0	3.15	47	3	2	65.2	63	12	50					
						Louisville (AAA)	0-0	1.93	3	0	0	4.2	6	0	4					
						Owen White	R-R	6-3	199	8/9/99	TEXAS	0-0	24.00	3	0	0	3.0	9	1	0
						Round Rock (AAA)	2-8	5.64	29	15	1	99.0	107	48	87					
55	Brandon Williamson	R-L	6-6	210	4/2/98	CINCINNATI	0-0	3.77	4	3	0	14.1	10	5	12					
						Louisville (AAA)	0-0	0.68	4	4	0	13.1	7	4	11					
						Dayton (A+)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	3.0	1	0	4					
67	Yosver Zulueta	R-R	6-1	190	1/23/98	CINCINNATI	0-0	4.96	12	0	0	16.1	15	7	20					
						Louisville (AAA)	4-2	3.83	40	0	1	54.0	52	32	65					
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB				
37	Tyler Stephenson	R-R	6-4	225	8/16/96	CINCINNATI	.258	138	457	69	118	19	66	48	117	1				
56	Jose Trevino	R-R	5-10	215	11/28/92	NEW YORK AL	.215	74	209	26	45	8	28	20	41	1				
						Somerset (AA)	.250	3	8	1	2	0	0	1	0	0				
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB				
	Cooper Bowman	R-R	6-0	205	1/25/00	Las Vegas (AAA)	.218	38	133	21	29	0	17	12	37	8				
						Midland (AA)	.281	80	313	62	88	12	53	46	75	35				
	Tyler Callihan	L-R	5-11	205	6/22/00	Louisville (AAA)	.357	4	14	5	5	1	2	6	4	1				
						Chattanooga (AA)	.271	69	247	27	67	8	25	27	78	21				
3	Jeimer Candelario	S-R	6-2	222	11/24/93	CINCINNATI	.225	112	427	47	96	20	56	27	114	4				
44	Elly De La Cruz	S-R	6-5	200	1/11/02	CINCINNATI	.259	160	618	105	160	25	76	69	218	67				
33	C. Encarnacion-Strand	R-R	6-0	224	12/1/99	CINCINNATI	.190	29	116	13	22	2	16	4	35	0				
4	Santiago Espinal	R-R	5-10	185	11/13/94	CINCINNATI	.246	118	357	32	88	9	45	24	54	11				
9	Gavin Lux	L-R	6-2	190	11/23/97	LOS ANGELES NL	.251	139	439	59	110	10	50	44	110	5				
16	Noelvi Marte	R-R	6-0	216	10/16/01	CINCINNATI	.210	66	229	24	48	4	18	9	75	9				
						Louisville (AAA)	.151	12	53	3	8	0	2	0	15	1				
9	Matt McLain	R-R	5-8	180	8/6/99	INJURED — Missed Season														
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB				
30	Will Benson	L-L	6-5	230	6/16/98	CINCINNATI	.187	128	343	41	64	14	43	40	154	16				
76	Blake Dunn	R-R	5-10	210	9/5/98	CINCINNATI	.154	19	26	8	4	1	1	2	11	2				
						Louisville (AAA)	.240	99	359	62	86	7	34	45	113	21				
17	Stuart Fairchild	R-R	6-0	205	3/17/96	CINCINNATI	.215	94	209	33	45	8	30	17	60	13				
27	Jake Fraley	L-L	6-0	206	5/25/95	CINCINNATI	.277	116	350	44	97	5	26	26	70	20				
29	TJ Friedl	L-L	5-10	180	8/14/95	CINCINNATI	.226	85	297	35	67	13	55	26	52	9				
						Louisville (AAA)	.185	7	27	5	5	0	2	4	4	0				
77	Rece Hinds	R-R	6-4	215	9/5/00	CINCINNATI	.261	24	46	9	12	5	11	4	16	2				
						Louisville (AAA)	.208	99	380	48	79	14	47	37	160	20				
26	Jacob Hurtubise	L-R	5-10	180	12/11/97	CINCINNATI	.185	29	54	7	10	0	4	6	18	2				
						Louisville (AAA)	.271	51	192	37	52	2	12	31	43	15				
						Dayton (A+)	.286	5	14	4	4	1	1	0	2	1				
						ACL Reds (R)	.200	3	10	1	2	0	2	0	4	1				
7	Spencer Steer	R-R	5-11	185	12/7/97	CINCINNATI	.225	158	574	74	129	20	92	72	137	25				



Milwaukee BREWERS

2025 PREDICTION

2ND

NL CENTRAL

2024 FINISH: 1st (93-69)

The Milwaukee Brewers enter 2025 needing to replace not only their leading run producer in shortstop Willy Adames, who signed a \$182 million free-agent contract with the San Francisco Giants, but also one of the game's best closers in Devin Williams, who was traded to the New York Yankees in December in exchange for lefthander Nestor Cortes and infield prospect Caleb Durbin.

It's standard operating procedure these days in baseball's smallest market, where despite the financial limitations, the Brewers have consistently punched above their weight class in winning three of the last four NL Central titles and advancing to the playoffs in six of the last seven years. There's plenty of talent returning, too, and in a division without a clear favorite, Milwaukee will once again expect to contend.

ROTATION

Freddy Peralta is coming off a season in which he set career highs for starts (32) and innings (173.2). His stuff remains electric (two straight 200-strikeout seasons), and he demonstrated guts by bouncing back from a subpar start against the New York Mets in a Game 1 loss in the teams' NL wild-card series with a shutdown eighth inning of relief in Game 3. Even still, the 28-year-old, entering his eighth season, needs to prove he can be a consistent performer over the course of an entire campaign. Perhaps the addition of Cortes — who often thrived under the microscope in New York — can rub off on his new teammate. Cortes gives Milwaukee a much-needed lefty whose experience and durability are exactly what it had been seeking entering the offseason. He'll slot right into the second or third spot and, health allowing, be an effective innings-eater. Righthander Aaron Civale, a trade acquisition last July, developed into one of the Brewers' more reliable starters down the stretch. Righthander Tobias Myers was a godsend in 2024 after finally debuting and being given a chance (7-6, 3.11 ERA in his 25 starts) following a nomadic minor-league existence; he'll need to prove his performance wasn't a fluke. The wild card entering 2025 will be former All-Star Brandon Woodruff, who missed all of 2024 while recovering from right shoulder surgery. If he's able to return to anything close to his former form, the Brewers will be in business. Lefthanders Aaron Ashby and DL Hall will also enter the equation at some point.

BULLPEN

Trevor Megill will get the chance to prove he's the next great Brewers closer. The early returns were good; he converted 20-of-22 save opportunities while Williams missed the first four months of 2024 with an injury and ended up going 21-for-24 overall. He has a triple-digit fastball and a nasty knuckle curve but needs to demonstrate that he can carry over his success as the unquestioned closer. Megill is one of many bullpen reclamation projects for Milwaukee, which has excelled at identifying, tweaking and improving arms dumped by other franchises. Righthanders Joel Payamps and Nick Mears and lefthanders Jared Koenig and Bryan Hudson are other obvious examples; the Brewers will count heavily on each in 2025. Ashby and Hall could also factor in. And don't forget



Jackson Chourio

American Family Field

Opened: 2001 • Capacity: 41,900
Left: 342' Center: 400' Right: 337'
Tickets: 414-902-4000
mlb.com/BREWERS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

**Largest difference between
FIP and ERA, 2023-24**

1. 2024 Brewers 0.54 (4.19 vs. 3.65)
2. 2023 Brewers 0.48 (4.21 vs. 3.73)
3. 2023 Padres 0.41 (4.14 vs. 3.73)
4. 2024 Guardians 0.37 (3.98 vs. 3.61)
5. 2023 Astros 0.37 (4.31 vs. 3.94)

BENNY SIEU-IMAGN IMAGES

young flamethrower Abner Uribe, who was Milwaukee's closer in the early going last season.

MIDDLE INFIELD

With Adames no longer a fixture up the middle, the Brewers spent the offseason weighing the pros and cons of utilizing youngsters Brice Turang and Joey Ortiz at the spot after standout seasons at second and third base, respectively. Both were drafted as shortstops and came up through the minors at that position, but general manager Matt Arnold admitted it was tough to consider moving either after Turang rated as the top overall defender in the NL in terms of Defensive Runs Saved and stole 50 bases, and Ortiz played terrific defense while also showing promise as a future run producer (11 homers, 60 RBIs in 142 games).

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

LF Jackson Chourio (R)
C William Contreras (R)
DH Christian Yelich (L)
1B Rhys Hoskins (R)
CF Garrett Mitchell (L)
SS Joey Ortiz (R)
RF Sal Frelick (L)
3B Caleb Durbin (R)
2B Brice Turang (L)

■ BENCH

C Eric Haase (R)
UTIL Tyler Black (L)
UTIL Andruw Monasterio (R)
OF Blake Perkins (S)

■ ROTATION

RHP Freddy Peralta
RHP Aaron Civale
LHP Nestor Cortes
RHP Tobias Myers
RHP Brandon Woodruff

■ BULLPEN

RHP Trevor Megill (C)
RHP Joel Payamps
RHP Nick Mears
LHP Aaron Ashby
LHP DL Hall
LHP Jared Koenig
LHP Bryan Hudson
RHP Abner Uribe

CORNERS

Rhys Hoskins bounced back from missing the 2023 season in Philadelphia (knee surgery) to hit 26 homers and drive in 82 runs in his first year with Milwaukee. Even so, Hoskins was an overall disappointment as his average sagged to .214 and his on-base percentage to .303, with his defense at first base often a liability. He picked up his \$18 million player option for 2025 to no one's surprise, and now the Brewers hope he returns to form. Third base is likely to see several players cycle through, with Ortiz, Durbin (who can also play second and some short), Andruw Monasterio and Oliver Dunn in the equation. Durbin, whose versatility and baserunning prowess are major positives, could end up with the most playing time there if he can hold up defensively.



William Contreras

OUTFIELD

It wouldn't be a stretch to say that the fate of the Brewers offense rests on the surgically repaired back of left fielder Christian Yelich, who had his first All-Star campaign since 2019 cut short by pain and weakness in his legs. Before he was sidelined in late July, Yelich was hitting .315 with a .909 OPS and had stolen 21 bases, a promising resurgence. Yelich was replaced in left field for the rest of 2024 by the franchise's next superstar, Jackson Chourio, who overcame a slow first two months to put up a 20-homer, 20-steal season. He was arguably the team's best player in September and October. Garrett Mitchell and Blake Perkins are standout defenders in center, while Sal Frelick established himself as the NL's best with the glove in right. More offense from all will be needed, however.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE BREWERS "What a job Pat Murphy did as manager. He'd hit and run, keep them aggressive on the bases, and always seems to make the style of play fit the game situation. Other teams had more talent, but the Brewers were able to find runs somehow and make it work. Brice Turang is great defensively, and I wonder if he'll move to short because he's very rangy for a second baseman. Sal Frelick will make extraordinary plays every day. Jackson Chourio was a little overmatched early, but he figured it out quickly, and you can see the thunder in his bat. Their starters do the job, but I can't quite see how. It stuns me that Freddy Peralta is good — you can see that slider coming, and he doesn't throw hard. Aaron Civale doesn't have much, either. But they get the most out of guys."

CATCHING

The Brewers can lay claim to possessing the game’s top overall catcher in Wil-
liam Contreras, an All-Star Game starter whose .281/23/92 line at the plate
was unrivaled among backstops and whose defense, while shakier than it was
in 2023, was more than solid. Eric Haase performed well when called upon in
Milwaukee’s odd three-catcher alignment in 2024, but this year he projects as
the backup.

DH/BENCH

It wouldn’t be a surprise to see Yelich DH a lot early on as he’s eased in due to
his back. Contreras, who wore down late last season because of his insistence on
catching almost every day, will see time in this spot, with Hoskins another can-
didate. Durbin, Monasterio, Dunn and rookie Tyler Black are options across the
infield, with the odd man out among Mitchell and Perkins the backup outfielder.

MANAGEMENT

Manager Pat Murphy’s aggressive approach helped rejuvenate the offense in
2024, and his take-no-prisoners mentality is a perfect fit for the hard-charging
Brewers. The front office, led by Arnold, continues to work wonders despite
the financial constraints. From the top down, Milwaukee is considered a model
franchise with regard to its operations and ability to consistently compete.

FINAL ANALYSIS

After having been in the mix so consistently in recent years, the Brewers now
expect to win — a valuable mindset considering not many outside the organiza-
tion feel the same way. There is enough talent on hand to again win the Central.
If they can, the challenge then becomes winning a postseason series for the first
time since 2018. That’s the albatross that now hangs around the franchise’s neck.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

TOP HONORS The Brewers can boast having baseball’s top executive as well
as the National League’s top manager entering 2025, with Matt Arnold and Pat
Murphy, respectively, having been so honored following the 2024 season. Both
awards were firsts in franchise history, with the executive award introduced in
2018 and voted on prior to the postseason by executives from all 30 teams. Ar-
nold, who has been with the franchise since 2015, took over as Milwaukee’s top
baseball decision-maker on Oct. 27, 2022. Among his top moves was signing
wunderkind Jackson Chourio before he’d even played a game in the majors to a
contract that could keep the outfielder with the franchise for a decade. Murphy,
meanwhile, won his award in his first full season as a major-league manager
after taking over for Craig Counsell. He had served as bench coach the previous
eight years.

SHUFFLING THE STAFF Milwaukee’s coaching staff underwent some changes
in the offseason. Returning is arguably the most important piece in pitching
coach Chris Hook, who’s been behind the Brewers’ incredible pitching success
in recent years, along with assistant pitching/strategy coach Jim Henderson.
New to the franchise is lead hitting coach Al LeBoeuf, and hitting coach Eric
Theisen and first base coach Julio Borbón join the major-league staff from
Triple-A.

RUNNING WILD Among the most noticeable changes enacted by Murphy in
his first year at the helm in 2024 was his willingness to drop down bunts and
steal bases — both of which place an increased amount of pressure on opposing
pitchers and defenses. In 2024, Milwaukee bunted for 24 hits (second-most in
MLB) and stole 217 bases (second in MLB), with Brice Turang’s 50 ranking him
third in the majors. Expect the Brewers to continue to play the aggressor on
offense, especially having lost top run producer Willy Adames to free agency.

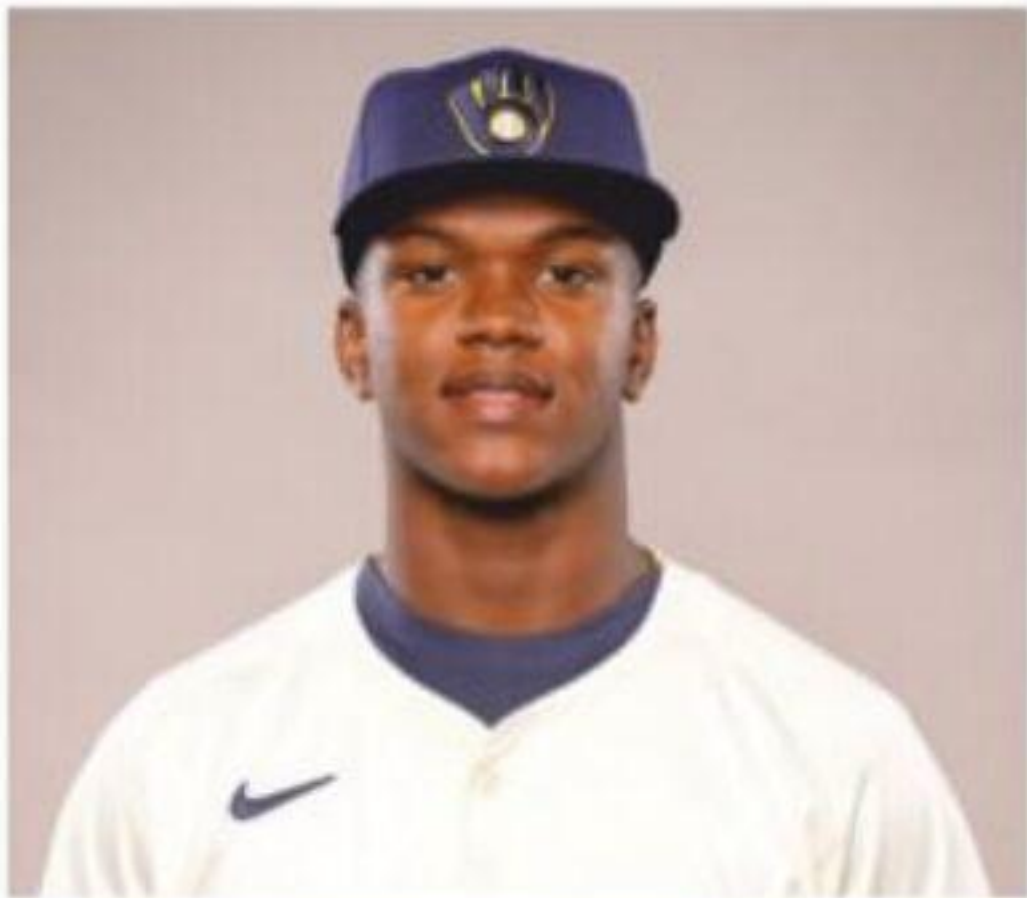
Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27 NYY	28	29 NYY
30 NYY	31 KC	1 KC	2 KC	3 CIN	4 CIN	5 CIN
6 CIN	7	8 COL	9 COL	10 COL	11 ARI	12 ARI
13 ARI	14 DET	15 DET	16 DET	17	18 A's	19 A's
20 A's	21 SF	22 SF	23 SF	24 SF	25 STL	26 STL
27 STL	28	29 CWS	30 CWS			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 CWS	2 CHC	3 CHC
4 CHC	5 HOU	6 HOU	7 HOU	8	9 TB	10 TB
11 TB	12 CLE	13 CLE	14 CLE	15	16 MIN	17 MIN
18 MIN	19 BAL	20 BAL	21 BAL	22 PIT	23 PIT	24 PIT
25 PIT	26 BOS	27 BOS	28 BOS	29	30 PHI	31 PHI
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 PHI	2 CIN	3 CIN	4 CIN	5	6 SD	7 SD
8 SD	9 ATL	10 ATL	11 ATL	12 STL	13 STL	14 STL
15 STL	16	17 CHC	18 CHC	19 CHC	20 MIN	21 MIN
22 MIN	23 PIT	24 PIT	25 PIT	26	27 COL	28 COL
29 COL	30					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 NYM	2 NYM	3 NYM	4 MIA	5 MIA
6 MIA	7 LAD	8 LAD	9 LAD	10	11 WAS	12 WAS
13 WAS	14	15 ALL-STAR BREAK	16	17	18 LAD	19 LAD
20 LAD	21 SEA	22 SEA	23 SEA	24	25 MIA	26 MIA
27 MIA	28 CHC	29 CHC	30 CHC	31		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 WAS	2 WAS
3 WAS	4 ATL	5 ATL	6 ATL	7	8 NYM	9 NYM
10 NYM	11 PIT	12 PIT	13 PIT	14	15 CIN	16 CIN
17 CIN	18 CHC	19 CHC	20 CHC	21 CHC	22 SF	23 SF
24 SF	25 ARI	26 ARI	27 ARI	28 ARI	29 TOR	30 TOR
31 TOR						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 PHI	2	3 PHI	4 PHI	5 PIT	6 PIT
7 PIT	8 TEX	9 TEX	10 TEX	11	12 STL	13 STL
14 STL	15	16 LAA	17 LAA	18 LAA	19 STL	20 STL
21 STL	22 SD	23 SD	24 SD	25	26 CIN	27 CIN
28 CIN	29	30				

STATISTICIAN

10 Grand slams hit by the Brewers in 2024, tying a franchise record. Rhys Hoskins led the way with three, which also tied the franchise record.

17 Pitchers to start a game for the Brewers in 2024, tying a franchise record. By employing “openers,” Milwaukee could come near the mark again in 2025.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



- **1. Jesus Made, SS/2B (17)**
Had 51 dynamite games in the Dominican Summer League.
- **2. Cooper Pratt, SS (20)**
Pratt’s first full professional season was a major success.
- **3. Jeferson Quero, C (22)** His 2024 season ended after one PA due to a separated right shoulder.
- **4. Jacob Misiorowski, RHP (22)** The stuff is undeniable, but his command remains a problem.
- **5. Tyler Black, INF (24)** Black’s strike-zone command is unquestioned; his defense isn’t.
- **6. Robert Gasser, LHP (25)** Had Tommy John surgery and is likely out until at least September.
- **7. Logan Henderson, RHP (23)** A strong competitor with strike-out stuff in Triple-A.
- **8. Yophery Rodriguez, OF (19)** Rodriguez jumped to Single-A Carolina in 2024 and impressed.
- **9. Brock Wilken, 3B (22)** Has prodigious power, but contact rate needs to improve.
- **10. Craig Yoho, RHP (25)** Yoho’s incredible changeup could make him a future closer.

SCOTT PAULUS/MILWAUKEE BREWERS

Brewers Roster

General Manager: Matt Arnold • Manager: Pat Murphy • Associate Manager: Rickie Weeks Jr. • Coaches: Julio Borbón (first base), Néstor Corredor (field coordinator), Connor Dawson (hitting), Daniel de Mondesert (assistant), Charlie Greene (bullpen), Jim Henderson (asst. pitching and strategy), Chris Hook (pitching), Jason Lane (third base), Al LeBoeuf (lead hitting), Eric Theisen (hitting)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
65	Grant Anderson	R-R	6-0	180	6/21/97	TEXAS	0-1	8.10	23	0	1	26.2	33	10	29	
						Round Rock (AAA)	3-0	2.93	26	0	1	27.2	22	14	34	
26	Aaron Ashby	R-L	6-1	188	5/24/98	MILWAUKEE	1-2	2.86	14	2	0	28.1	20	10	33	
						Nashville (AAA)	4-7	8.04	25	14	0	84.0	95	73	92	
50	J.B. Bukauskas	R-R	6-0	208	10/11/96	MILWAUKEE	0-0	1.50	6	0	0	6.0	3	1	6	
						Nashville (AAA)	0-0	1.80	6	0	0	5.0	4	0	3	
						ACL Brewers (R)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	1	0	1	
32	Aaron Civale	R-R	6-2	215	6/12/95	MILWAUKEE	6-3	3.53	14	14	0	74.0	65	25	65	
						TAMPA BAY	2-6	5.07	17	17	0	87.0	93	27	84	
65	Nestor Cortes	R-L	5-11	210	12/10/94	NEW YORK AL	9-10	3.77	31	30	0	174.1	162	39	162	
54	Robert Gasser	L-L	6-0	192	5/31/99	MILWAUKEE	2-0	2.57	5	5	0	28.0	28	1	16	
						Nashville (AAA)	0-1	5.25	3	3	0	12.0	12	6	17	
37	DL Hall	L-L	6-2	203	9/19/98	MILWAUKEE	1-2	5.02	13	7	0	43.0	48	21	44	
						Nashville (AAA)	1-2	3.83	14	14	0	40.0	36	25	35	
						Wisconsin (A+)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	1.0	0	0	1	
	Logan Henderson	R-R	5-11	194	3/2/02	Nashville (AAA)	1-3	4.56	6	6	0	23.2	19	6	26	
						Biloxi (AA)	6-2	3.30	9	9	0	46.1	34	7	58	
						Wisconsin (A+)	0-1	1.35	2	2	0	6.2	4	2	10	
						ACL Brewers (R)	0-0	0.00	2	2	0	4.2	2	0	10	
52	Bryan Hudson	L-L	6-8	220	5/8/97	MILWAUKEE	6-1	1.73	43	0	0	62.1	28	17	62	
						Nashville (AAA)	0-0	2.08	8	0	0	8.2	10	2	13	
47	Jared Koenig	R-L	6-5	235	1/24/94	MILWAUKEE	9-4	2.47	55	6	1	62.0	54	23	63	
						Nashville (AAA)	0-0	1.35	6	0	0	6.2	3	2	11	
25	Nick Mears	R-R	6-2	200	10/7/96	MILWAUKEE	0-1	7.30	13	0	0	12.1	14	3	18	
						COLORADO	1-4	5.56	41	0	0	45.1	47	21	57	
29	Trevor Megill	L-R	6-8	255	12/5/93	MILWAUKEE	1-3	2.72	48	0	21	46.1	33	14	50	
						Nashville (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	2.0	1	2	3	
						Wisconsin (A+)	0-0	0.00	2	1	0	2.0	1	0	2	
36	Tobias Myers	R-R	6-1	217	8/5/98	MILWAUKEE	9-6	3.00	27	25	0	138.0	126	36	127	
						Nashville (AAA)	1-1	1.45	5	3	0	18.2	13	7	24	
	Chad Patrick	R-R	6-1	205	8/14/98	Nashville (AAA)	14-1	2.90	26	24	0	136.1	109	39	145	
31	Joel Payamps	R-R	6-2	220	4/7/94	MILWAUKEE	3-7	3.05	68	0	6	59.0	39	18	59	
59	Elvis Peguero	R-R	6-5	241	3/20/97	MILWAUKEE	7-4	2.98	52	0	2	51.1	52	27	47	
						Nashville (AAA)	0-1	8.44	6	0	1	5.1	7	3	4	
51	Freddy Peralta	R-R	6-0	202	6/4/96	MILWAUKEE	11-9	3.68	32	32	0	173.2	143	68	200	
00	Carlos Rodriguez	R-R	6-0	206	11/27/01	MILWAUKEE	0-3	7.30	3	3	0	12.1	19	3	9	
						Nashville (AAA)	9-9	4.51	25	22	1	129.2	100	61	129	
	Connor Thomas	L-L	5-11	195	5/29/98	Memphis (AAA)	7-4	2.89	56	3	3	90.1	97	24	79	
45	Abner Uribe	R-R	6-3	215	6/20/00	MILWAUKEE	2-2	6.91	14	0	3	14.1	15	12	14	
						Nashville (AAA)	1-0	1.04	7	0	1	8.2	3	7	7	
	Grant Wolfram	L-L	6-8	240	12/12/96	Round Rock (AAA)	3-1	3.34	44	0	6	56.2	47	26	61	
						Frisco (AA)	1-0	0.00	2	0	0	3.2	0	1	8	
53	Brandon Woodruff	L-R	6-4	244	2/10/93	INJURED — Missed Season										
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
24	William Contreras	R-R	5-11	212	12/24/97	MILWAUKEE	.281	155	595	99	167	23	92	78	139	9
13	Eric Haase	R-R	5-10	198	12/18/92	MILWAUKEE	.273	30	66	10	18	5	14	3	28	0
						Nashville (AAA)	.279	41	147	28	41	9	31	19	56	1
76	Jeferson Quero	R-R	5-11	215	10/8/02	Nashville (AAA)	.000	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
7	Tyler Black	L-R	6-1	204	7/26/00	MILWAUKEE	.204	18	49	4	10	0	2	7	17	3
						Nashville (AAA)	.258	102	387	61	100	14	67	61	87	20
18	Vinny Capra	R-R	5-8	180	7/7/96	MILWAUKEE	.111	3	9	1	1	0	0	0	3	0
						Nashville (AAA)	.261	110	429	61	112	8	53	52	91	10
15	Oliver Dunn	L-R	5-10	198	9/2/97	MILWAUKEE	.221	41	95	11	21	1	7	6	40	3
						Nashville (AAA)	.310	8	29	6	9	1	3	4	9	2
	Caleb Durbin	R-R	5-6	185	2/22/00	Scranton/WB (AAA)	.287	82	310	57	89	10	60	47	37	29
						Somerset (AA)	.125	7	24	4	3	0	0	6	3	2
						Tampa (A)	.000	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	Rhys Hoskins	R-R	6-4	240	3/17/93	MILWAUKEE	.214	131	449	59	96	26	82	53	149	3
14	Andruw Monasterio	R-R	5-11	196	5/30/97	MILWAUKEE	.208	59	125	14	26	1	16	16	40	6
						Nashville (AAA)	.243	10	37	7	9	0	4	7	10	6
3	Joey Ortiz	R-R	5-9	183	7/14/98	MILWAUKEE	.239	142	440	58	105	11	60	56	103	11
						Wisconsin (A+)	.000	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
2	Brice Turang	L-R	6-0	188	11/21/99	MILWAUKEE	.254	155	559	72	142	7	57	50	105	50
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
11	Jackson Chourio	R-R	6-0	198	3/11/04	MILWAUKEE	.275	148	528	80	145	21	79	39	121	22
6	Isaac Collins	S-R	5-8	185	7/22/97	MILWAUKEE	.118	11	17	0	2	0	0	2	10	1
						Nashville (AAA)	.273	113	417	75	114	14	76	71	96	24
10	Sal Frelick	L-R	5-8	185	4/19/00	MILWAUKEE	.259	145	475	66	123	2	32	39	78	18
28	Brewer Hicklen	R-R	6-1	220	2/9/96	MILWAUKEE	.000	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	4	1
						Nashville (AAA)	.246	115	415	78	102	22	72	61	139	44
5	Garrett Mitchell	L-R	6-3	224	9/4/98	MILWAUKEE	.255	69	196	33	50	8	21	25	71	11
						Nashville (AAA)	.318	12	44	7	14	4	10	6	10	4
						ACL Brewers (R)	.286	2	7	2	2	0	3	2	2	0
16	Blake Perkins	S-R	6-0	208	9/10/96	MILWAUKEE	.240	121	383	54	92	6	43	42	108	23
22	Christian Yelich	L-R	6-3	206	12/5/91	MILWAUKEE	.315	73	270	44	85	11	42	40	58	21

Pittsburgh PIRATES

2025 PREDICTION

4TH

NL CENTRAL

2024 FINISH: 5TH (76-86)

The Pittsburgh Pirates are hoping that an interesting group of young starting pitchers can return them to relevance. Righthanders Paul Skenes and Jared Jones will lead the rotation after making their major-league debuts in 2024. Skenes was the National League Rookie of the Year and finished third in the NL Cy Young Award voting while looking like a generational-type player.

The Pirates haven't been to the postseason since 2015 or had a winning season since 2018, posting only four winning campaigns in the past 32 years. To get back to the playoffs or even reach .500, the Pirates will need more than Skenes and good starting pitching. They ranked 20th in the major leagues in fielding percentage last season, 24th in runs scored and 27th in relief pitcher ERA while finishing with a 76-86 record for a second straight year.

ROTATION

The 22-year-old Skenes is already one of the top 10 starting pitchers in the major leagues despite having made just 23 career starts. He regularly hits 100 mph with his fastball and possesses a wide assortment of pitches, outstanding control and a strong work ethic. Jones, 23, is another hard-throwing youngster who reached the major leagues ahead of schedule last year when he made the Opening Day roster. At 6-foot-1, 190 pounds, Jones isn't a physical specimen like Skenes, but he also hits triple digits with his fastball and pitches with swagger. Righthander Mitch Keller slots as the No. 3 starter, a role more suited to his talent than when he was the ace of the staff. Bailey Falter projects to be the rotation's lone lefthander. He had a solid first full season as an MLB starter last year and should have more upside at 27. Johan Oviedo returns after missing last season following Tommy John surgery. He showed considerable promise in 2023 when he logged 177.2 innings in his first full year as a starting pitcher in the majors. Top prospect Bubba Chandler is poised to make a big impact.

BULLPEN

David Bednar is the presumptive closer, but neither general manager Ben Cherington nor manager Derek Shelton is ready to commit until they see the two-time All-Star pitch in spring training. Bednar blew seven of 30 save opportunities and had a 5.77 ERA last season in 62 games after being limited to two Grapefruit League appearances because of a lat injury. Bednar committed himself to get into better shape in the offseason. There is not a clear alternative at closer if Bednar struggles again, though righthanders Dennis Santana and Colin Holderman figure to be the primary setup relievers. Santana had the best stretch of his seven-year career last season, posting a 2.44 ERA in 39 games after the Pirates claimed him off waivers in June from the New York Yankees. Another waiver claim, lefthander Joey Wentz, posted a 1.50 ERA in eight appearances with the Pirates last season after being designated for assignment by the Detroit Tigers. He could play a key role, as could fellow lefty Caleb Ferguson, who signed a one-year, \$3 million deal. The Pirates are hoping talented young



Paul Skenes

PNC Park

Opened: 2001 • Capacity: 38,747
Left: 325' Center: 399' Right: 320'
Tickets: 877-893-2827
mlb.com/PIRATES

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Lowest rookie-season ERA (min. 100 IP), 1993-2024

1. 2024 Paul Skenes, Pirates	1.96
2. 2006 Francisco Liriano, Twins	2.16
3. 2016 Chris Devenski, Astros	2.16
4. 2013 José Fernández, Marlins	2.19
5. 1995 Hideo Nomo, Dodgers	2.54

CHARLES LECLAIRE-USA TODAY SPORTS

righties Carmen Mlodzinski and Kyle Nicolas show more consistency. Veterans Tanner Rainey and Carson Fulmer will be in spring training as non-roster players after signing as free agents.

MIDDLE INFIELD

The Pirates are confident that veteran Isiah Kiner-Falefa can be their everyday shortstop and leadoff hitter after acquiring him from the Toronto Blue Jays at the trade deadline. Kiner-Falefa had 10 Defensive Runs Saved in 2022 when he was the Yankees' regular shortstop, but the seven-year veteran has a career on-base percentage of only .313. Nick Gonzales finished last season as the regular at second base, making a better impression than as a rookie in 2023. However, his hold on the job is tenuous

because of shaky fielding that offset a .270 batting average and 49 RBIs in 94 games in 2024. Jared Triolo won a National League Gold Glove last season as a utility player, and his natural position is third base. However, he could factor more in the middle infield because of the questions surrounding Kiner-Falefa and Gonzales. Rookie Nick Yorke is another alternative at second. He was acquired at the deadline from the Red Sox and made a solid impression.

CORNERS

The Pirates hope Spencer Horwitz can end the revolving door at first base after being acquired from the Blue Jays through the Guardians in a Winter Meetings trade. Horwitz has a career .355 on-base percentage, but his power potential is iffy. Rookie Billy Cook could platoon with the left-handed-hitting Horwitz. The Pirates acquired Cook at the trade deadline last season from Baltimore. Third baseman Ke'Bryan Hayes was limited to 96 games last season because of a back injury and did not play well when in the lineup. The Pirates are hopeful he can return to his 2023 form when he won a Gold Glove and hit .299 with 10 homers in 49 games in the second half.



Oneil Cruz

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

SS	Isiah Kiner-Falefa (R)
LF	Bryan Reynolds (S)
CF	Oneil Cruz (L)
DH	Andrew McCutchen (R)
C	Joey Bart (R)
1B	Spencer Horwitz (L)
2B	Nick Gonzales (R)
3B	Ke'Bryan Hayes (R)
RF	Joshua Palacios (L)

■ BENCH

C	Jason Delay (R)
INF	Jared Triolo (R)
INF/OF	Nick Yorke (R)
OF/1B	Billy Cook (R)

■ ROTATION

RHP	Paul Skenes
RHP	Mitch Keller
RHP	Jared Jones
LHP	Bailey Falter
RHP	Johan Oviedo

■ BULLPEN

RHP	David Bednar (C)
RHP	Dennis Santana
RHP	Colin Holderman
RHP	Carmen Mlodzinski
RHP	Kyle Nicolas
LHP	Caleb Ferguson
LHP	Joey Wentz
RHP	Peter Strzelecki

OUTFIELD

Left fielder Bryan Reynolds was an All-Star last season and is the most dependable hitter in the Pirates' lineup, although his defensive issues might prompt a move to first base. He has a .276/.352/.472 slash line over the last four seasons with 99 home runs. Uber-talented Oneil Cruz was shifted to center field from shortstop late last season, and the Pirates were pleased with his defense. They are hoping the switch will help the 6-foot-7 Cruz relax on offense; club officials believe he is capable of even more than the 21 home runs and 22 steals he produced in 2024. There figures to be open competition in spring training for the

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE PIRATES "Paul Skenes is the best starter in baseball right now, and he's just going to get better next year. He'll develop a cutter or a short slider, and it's gonna be game over. This guy could break Bob Gibson's ERA record; he could honestly be that good. With a guy like him, the window is wide open, and they should be going all-in right now. But even if they wanted to sign big free agents, it would be hard to convince players that ownership is committed to winning. Think about it: They were very lucky last season — no major injuries — and still won only 76 games. Bubba Chandler's gonna come up and join the rotation, but otherwise the cupboard is bare in the farm system. Spencer Horowitz will help because he gets on base, but he doesn't hit for power, and this team had the worst slugging percentage in the NL last year. They've had too many players regress, like Ke'Bryan Hayes and Jack Suwinski, and now that Oneil Cruz has made the switch to center field, the pressure is on to move into the league's elite."

right field job that could include Joshua Palacios, Jack Suwinski, Ji Hwan Bae, Cook and Yorke. Suwinski hit 26 homers for the Pirates in 2023 but backslid last season and finished in the minors.

CATCHING

The Pirates have four catchers on their 40-man roster with MLB experience. Joey Bart stands at the top of the depth chart after reviving his career last season, when he was acquired from the San Francisco Giants in a trade and homered 13 times in 80 games. Endy Rodríguez would have likely been the Opening Day starter last season but injured his elbow playing winter ball in his native Dominican Republic and needed Tommy John surgery. He will likely knock the rust off at Indianapolis to begin this season after being out for so long.

DH/BENCH

Andrew McCutchen will get the bulk of the DH at-bats after signing a one-year, \$5 million contract for the third straight offseason. The 38-year-old still has pop, as he homered 20 times last season. Holdovers Liover Peguero and Alike Williams should be in the mix for backup infield roles along with prospect Tsung-Che Cheng and offseason acquisitions Enmanuel Valdes and Tristan Gray. The Pirates traded with the Red Sox for Valdez and claimed Gray off waivers from the Athletics. Jason Delay, a strong defender, and Henry Davis, the first overall pick in 2021, figure to compete for the backup catcher spot.

MANAGEMENT

The Pirates have gone 294-414 in the five seasons since general manager Ben Cherington and manager Derek Shelton replaced Neal Huntington and Clint Hurdle. Yet owner Bob Nutting has given no indication that the duo is on the hot seat entering 2025. The fans are frustrated with Nutting, as the franchise annually has one of the lowest payrolls in the major leagues.

FINAL ANALYSIS

Skenes, Jones and the pitching prospects at the upper levels of the farm system give the Pirates reasons for hope. However, their deficiencies on offense and defense along with a volatile bullpen will make it hard for them to contend.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

SKENES LOOKS AHEAD Paul Skenes didn't take much time to celebrate becoming just the second Pirates player to win the National League Rookie of the Year Award, joining Jason Bay (2004). "Going to sleep early and getting back to work tomorrow," Skenes said when asked how he was going to mark the occasion. Skenes wasn't kidding; he started talking about 2025 as soon as the 2024 season ended. "This is a really good foundation to have, in terms of learning how to compete at this level and compete against these people, but also the travel and just the schedule of it, just being able to manage it," Skenes said. "I think the foundation that we built here is really strong. I think it's just, hopefully, going to help me for the rest of my career."

HOPING FOR HEALTH Third baseman Ke'Bryan Hayes had a miserable 2024 season. He hit just .233 with four home runs while being limited to 96 games because of back problems. "There's nothing I love more than playing baseball, and it was tough to sit and watch," said Hayes, who has spent the winter on a program designed to strengthen his back.

PIT STOP The Pirates acquired first baseman Spencer Horwitz from the Guardians in a trade at the Winter Meetings just two hours after Cleveland had received him from the Toronto Blue Jays in a deal. "Going to Cleveland, I was a little confused," Horwitz said. "I know they have some really good first basemen. But then when I got traded to Pittsburgh, I was super excited."

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					27 MIA	28 MIA
						29 MIA
30 MIA	31 TB	1 TB	2 TB	3	4 NYY	5 NYY
6 NYY	7 STL	8 STL	9 STL	10	11 CIN	12 CIN
13 CIN	14 WAS	15 WAS	16 WAS	17 WAS	18 CLE	19 CLE
20 CLE	21	22 LAA	23 LAA	24 LAA	25 LAD	26 LAD
27 LAD	28	29 CHC	30 CHC			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 CHC	2 SD
						3 SD
4 SD	5 STL	6 STL	7 STL	8	9 ATL	10 ATL
11 ATL	12 NYM	13 NYM	14 NYM	15	16 PHI	17 PHI
18 PHI	19 CIN	20 CIN	21 CIN	22 MIL	23 MIL	24 MIL
25 MIL	26 ARI	27 ARI	28 ARI	29	30 SD	31 SD
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 SD	2	3 HOU	4 HOU	5 HOU	6 PHI	7 PHI
8 PHI	9 MIA	10 MIA	11 MIA	12 CHC	13 CHC	14 CHC
15 CHC	16	17 DET	18 DET	19 DET	20 TEX	21 TEX
22 TEX	23 MIL	24 MIL	25 MIL	26	27 NYM	28 NYM
29 NYM	30 STL					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 STL	2 STL	3	4 SEA	5 SEA
6 SEA	7 KC	8 KC	9 KC	10	11 MIN	12 MIN
13 MIN	14	15	16	17	18 CWS	19 CWS
20 CWS	21 DET	22 DET	23 DET	24	25 ARI	26 ARI
27 ARI	28 SF	29 SF	30 SF	31		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 COL	2 COL
3 COL	4 SF	5 SF	6 SF	7 CIN	8 CIN	9 CIN
10 CIN	11 MIL	12 MIL	13 MIL	14	15 CHC	16 CHC
17 CHC	18 TOR	19 TOR	20 TOR	21	22 COL	23 COL
24 COL	25 STL	26 STL	27 STL	28	29 BOS	30 BOS
31 BOS						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 LAD	2 LAD	3 LAD	4 MIL	5 MIL
6 MIL	7	8 BAL	9 BAL	10 BAL	11 WAS	12 WAS
13 WAS	14	15 CHC	16 CHC	17 CHC	18	19 A's
20 A's	21	22 CIN	23 CIN	24 CIN	25 ATL	26 ATL
27 ATL	28	29	30			

STATISTICIAN

4 Consecutive seasons Bryan Reynolds has led the Pirates in home runs and RBIs, a franchise record.

9 The Pirates became the ninth team in National League history to have two rookie pitchers with at least 125 strikeouts as Skenes finished with 170, and Jared Jones had 132.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



1. Bubba Chandler, RHP (22) Former Clemson QB recruit should make MLB debut in early '25.

2. Konnor Griffin, SS/CF (18) Could be an above-average short-stop or a star center fielder.

3. Termarr Johnson 2B/SS (20) The Pirates believe in his left-handed hit tool.

4. Thomas Harrington, RHP (23) Went 7-3 with a 2.61 ERA in 22 games at three levels in '24.

5. Braxton Ashcraft, RHP (25) Injuries have plagued him, but he has an electric arm.

6. Nick Yorke, INF/OF (22) Second is his natural position, but he's gotten a look in the outfield.

7. Wyatt Sanford, SS (19) Speedy defender received an over-slot bonus of \$2.5 million.

8. Hunter Barco, LHP (24) Paul Skenes mentions Barco among organization's top prospects.

9. Anthony Solometo, LHP (22) Pirates are confident he can bounce back from a down year.

10. Levi Sterling, RHP (18) The Pirates signed him to a \$2,511,400 bonus as a supplemental first-round pick last year.

Pirates Roster

General Manager: Ben Cherington • Manager: Derek Shelton • Coaches: Tarrik Brock (first base), Radley Haddad (game planning), Matt Hague (major league hitting), Don Kelly (bench), Mendy López (infield), Oscar Marin (pitching), Christian Marrero (asst. hitting), Stephen Morales (interpreter), Miguel Perez (bullpen), Mike Rabelo (third base), Brent Strom (asst. pitching), Jonny Tucker

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
67	Braxton Ashcraft	L-R	6-5	195	10/5/99	Indianapolis (AAA)	1-0	0.47	5	4	0	19.1	15	4	14	
						Altoona (AA)	2-2	3.69	11	10	0	53.2	51	8	63	
51	David Bednar	L-R	6-0	225	10/10/94	PITTSBURGH	3-8	5.77	62	0	23	57.2	54	28	58	
						Altoona (AA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	0	1	
53	Mike Burrows	R-R	6-1	190	11/8/99	PITTSBURGH	1-0	2.70	1	0	0	3.1	2	3	2	
						Indianapolis (AAA)	1-1	4.06	10	9	0	37.2	38	15	45	
						Bradenton (A)	0-1	5.59	4	4	0	9.2	10	5	11	
						FCL Pirates (R)	0-1	15.75	2	2	0	4.0	7	4	3	
26	Bailey Falter	R-L	6-4	205	4/24/97	PITTSBURGH	8-9	4.43	28	28	0	142.1	138	45	97	
						Indianapolis (AAA)	0-0	6.00	1	1	0	3.0	5	0	3	
	Caleb Ferguson	R-L	6-3	226	7/2/96	NEW YORK AL	1-3	5.13	42	0	1	33.1	34	16	41	
						HOUSTON	0-1	3.86	20	0	0	21.0	22	9	26	
35	Colin Holderman	R-R	6-4	230	10/8/95	PITTSBURGH	3-6	3.16	55	0	0	51.1	42	25	56	
						Indianapolis (AAA)	0-0	5.87	8	1	0	7.2	6	2	10	
37	Jared Jones	L-R	6-1	190	8/6/01	PITTSBURGH	6-8	4.14	22	22	0	121.2	106	39	132	
						Indianapolis (AAA)	0-1	4.91	3	3	0	11.0	9	3	16	
23	Mitch Keller	R-R	6-3	220	4/4/96	PITTSBURGH	11-12	4.25	31	31	0	178.0	182	50	166	
50	Carmen Mlodzinski	R-R	6-2	220	2/19/99	PITTSBURGH	5-5	3.38	40	4	0	50.2	41	19	46	
						Indianapolis (AAA)	0-1	6.75	15	0	0	17.1	22	8	17	
						Bradenton (A)	0-0	9.00	1	0	0	1.0	2	0	3	
36	Dauri Moreta	R-R	6-2	185	4/15/96	INJURED — Missed Season										
62	Kyle Nicolas	R-R	6-4	223	2/22/99	PITTSBURGH	2-2	3.95	51	0	0	54.2	51	31	55	
						Indianapolis (AAA)	0-0	0.84	9	0	1	10.2	2	9	13	
24	Johan Oviedo	R-R	6-5	245	3/2/98	INJURED — Missed Season										
60	Dennis Santana	R-R	6-2	190	4/12/96	PITTSBURGH	1-1	2.44	39	0	1	44.1	30	11	50	
						NEW YORK AL	2-0	6.26	23	0	2	27.1	27	10	19	
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	0-0	6.75	2	0	0	1.1	3	3	2	
30	Paul Skenes	R-R	6-6	235	5/29/02	PITTSBURGH	11-3	1.96	23	23	0	133.0	94	32	170	
						Indianapolis (AAA)	0-0	0.99	7	7	0	27.1	17	8	45	
44	Peter Strzelecki	R-R	6-2	216	10/24/94	CLEVELAND	0-0	2.31	10	0	0	11.2	11	3	9	
						Columbus (AAA)	3-1	5.01	44	0	9	46.2	48	16	55	
34	Joey Wentz	L-L	6-5	220	10/6/97	PITTSBURGH	1-0	1.50	8	0	0	12.0	6	6	13	
						DETROIT	0-2	5.37	38	0	1	55.1	60	27	60	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
14	Joey Bart	R-R	6-2	238	12/15/96	PITTSBURGH	.265	80	253	38	67	13	45	22	73	0
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.353	6	17	2	6	0	4	3	3	0
32	Henry Davis	R-R	6-0	210	9/21/99	PITTSBURGH	.144	37	104	9	15	1	5	13	45	0
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.307	57	218	44	67	13	43	23	57	8
						Altoona (AA)	.000	2	6	1	0	0	0	2	5	0
55	Jason Delay	R-R	5-11	190	3/7/95	PITTSBURGH	.200	7	15	1	3	0	6	3	0	0
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.287	45	150	20	43	1	16	14	27	1
						Bradenton (A)	.000	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
5	Endy Rodríguez	S-R	6-0	200	5/26/00	Indianapolis (AAA)	.333	4	15	2	5	1	4	1	3	0
						Altoona (AA)	.208	6	24	4	5	0	1	1	6	0
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
71	Tsung-Che Cheng	L-R	5-7	173	7/26/01	Indianapolis (AAA)	.462	6	13	5	6	0	1	4	2	1
						Altoona (AA)	.218	126	422	64	92	11	54	61	117	16
28	Billy Cook	R-R	5-11	205	1/7/99	PITTSBURGH	.224	16	49	5	11	3	8	0	19	1
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.276	30	105	19	29	5	21	17	36	9
						Norfolk (AAA)	.279	70	262	42	73	11	43	34	69	12
						Bowie (AA)	.255	15	51	10	13	1	10	8	11	4
39	Nick Gonzales	R-R	5-9	190	5/27/99	PITTSBURGH	.270	94	359	42	97	7	49	18	74	5
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.356	34	135	37	48	5	20	15	25	0
43	Tristan Gray	L-R	6-1	215	3/22/96	MIAMI	.000	7	7	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
						Jacksonville (AAA)	.245	100	364	48	89	17	58	37	110	0
						OAKLAND	.143	8	21	0	3	0	0	3	13	0
						Las Vegas (AAA)	.296	12	54	11	16	2	6	4	11	0
13	Ke'Bryan Hayes	R-R	5-11	195	1/28/97	PITTSBURGH	.233	96	365	38	85	4	25	23	75	11
2	Spencer Horwitz	L-R	5-10	190	11/14/97	TORONTO	.265	97	328	46	87	12	40	42	70	0
						Buffalo (AAA)	.335	57	212	41	71	4	38	44	41	3
7	Isiah Kiner-Falefa	R-R	5-11	190	3/23/95	PITTSBURGH	.240	50	208	21	50	1	10	3	41	8
						Altoona (AA)	.500	1	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
						TORONTO	.292	83	257	32	75	7	33	13	37	3
						Buffalo (AAA)	.333	2	6	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
31	Liover Peguero	R-R	6-1	220	12/31/00	PITTSBURGH	.200	3	10	0	2	0	2	0	3	0
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.257	128	495	68	127	13	79	46	139	14
19	Jared Triolo	R-R	6-3	210	2/8/98	PITTSBURGH	.216	125	394	41	85	9	46	42	118	8
48	Enmanuel Valdez	L-R	5-8	191	12/28/98	BOSTON	.214	76	201	23	43	6	28	17	53	1
						Worcester (AAA)	.233	50	193	26	45	11	30	27	53	3
25	Alika Williams	R-R	6-1	180	3/12/99	PITTSBURGH	.207	37	87	13	18	0	5	3	22	1
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.311	41	164	27	51	0	13	20	34	2
38	Nick Yorke	R-R	6-0	200	4/2/02	PITTSBURGH	.216	11	37	4	8	2	5	4	12	2
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.355	40	152	26	54	2	26	18	33	7
						Worcester (AAA)	.310	38	145	32	45	6	19	24	32	6
						Portland (AA)	.251	45	175	21	44	4	27	18	36	8
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
3	Ji Hwan Bae	L-R	5-11	185	7/26/99	PITTSBURGH	.189	29	74	11	14	0	6	6	24	6
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.341	66	246	49	84	7	41	41	63	14
						Bradenton (A)	.667	1	3	0	2	0	1	0	0	0
15	Oneil Cruz	L-R	6-7	215	10/4/98	PITTSBURGH	.259	146	541	72	140	21	76	51	181	22
24	Andrew McCutchen	R-R	5-10	190	10/10/86	PITTSBURGH	.232	120	448	66	104	20	50	58	133	3
77	Joshua Palacios	L-R	6-0	200	7/30/95	PITTSBURGH	.224	23	67	10	15	2	9	10	12	1
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.291	50	182	32	53	5	25	22	47	5
						Greensboro (A+)	.231	4	13	2	3	2	4	0	4	0
						Bradenton (A)	.294	5	17	2	5	0	2	1	4	1
10	Bryan Reynolds	S-R	6-2	205	1/27/95	PITTSBURGH	.275	156	622	73	171	24	88	57	156	10
65	Jack Suwinski	L-L	6-2	215	7/29/98	PITTSBURGH	.182	88	247	29	45	9	26	27	79	9
						Indianapolis (AAA)	.239	48	180	24	43	7	27	17	59	3

St. Louis CARDINALS

2025 PREDICTION
5TH
NL CENTRAL
2024 FINISH: 2ND (83-79)

During a decade spent chasing a return to the World Series and maintaining their brand as a perennial division favorite, the Cardinals insisted that their model and their fanbase could not “stomach” a step back, even in an attempt to move forward.

Time to test that theory. The Cardinals are “going young” and investing in a plan to prioritize development for the future as they near a leadership change. Long-time president of baseball operations John Mozeliak will step aside at season’s end after guiding a “reset.” The Paul Goldschmidt-Nolan Arenado super team-up ended with as many MVP awards (one) as playoff wins (one), while the minor-league infrastructure eroded. A transition year is underway, complete with a new sales pitch. It’s no longer watching stars maintain a history of pursuing a pennant. The Cardinals want fans to buy into watching them cultivate the stars who will someday win the next one.

ROTATION

The one area where the youth movement won’t be as overt is the rotation. Five starters return. Offered the opportunity to be traded, Sonny Gray expressed his preference to stay during the retooling and lead a group that includes former All-Star Miles Mikolas, lefty Steven Matz, trade acquisition Erick Fedde and burgeoning righthander Andre Pallante. Although they’re the same names, this group can illustrate what the Cardinals want to do differently. Gray, signed in November 2023 to the club’s largest free-agent contract, authored the highest full-season strikeout rate of his career (30.3 percent). Pallante saw his jump from 14.2 percent to a career-best 18.5 percent with the addition of a sinker. Likewise, rookie Michael McGreevy will earn starts due to an improved cutter. The Cardinals want the support and innovation available to the big-league staff to filter down to prospects, too, and see gains throughout, from Mikolas and Matz regaining their form to Fedde enhancing his. If Cardinals do outplay expectations, it begins with the starters.

BULLPEN

The undisputed strength of a club that went 29-22 in one-run games, the relief corps is built to funnel leads to shutdown closer Ryan Helsley. How they get to him is an intriguing question. Options abound. JoJo Romero and Ryan Fernandez are the incumbent left-right answers, respectively, though the club is eager to see if Matthew Liberatore and Riley O’Brien have the stuff to challenge as a left-right combo. The turn toward youth sets up the bullpen as a clearinghouse with potential starters Liberatore, McGreevy and Gordon Graceffo keeping warm in relief and a handful of power arms shuttling between Triple-A and the majors as the club looks for a lightning talent to strike. The Cardinals prioritized Helsley’s availability and used him in classic closer spots, and he rewarded them with a club-record 49 saves. Helsley is a free agent this November, and his encore will shape the Cardinals’ future — whether he’s a part of it or he gives way to the talent they get from trading him.



Masyn Winn

Busch Stadium

Opened: 2006 • Capacity: 44,383
Left: 336' Center: 400' Right: 335'
Tickets: 314-345-9000
mlb.com/CARDINALS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Largest improvement in strikeout-to-walk rate (min. 120 IP), 2023-24

1. Jack Flaherty, Tigers/Dodgers	2.86
2. Sonny Gray, Cardinals	1.88
3. Ryne Nelson, Diamondbacks	1.62
4. Miles Mikolas, Cardinals	1.37
5. Andrew Heaney, Rangers	1.36

MIDDLE INFIELD

Hall of Fame shortstop Ozzie Smith says that Masyn Winn will win multiple Gold Gloves and emerge as the next face of the franchise. The Cardinals are banking on it. Winn ascended to the leadoff spot with a blend of poise and power beyond his years and finished as a Gold Glove finalist. An acrobatic fielder with the best arm in the biz, Winn will be a favorite to win his first in 2025. He is at the center of the Cardinals' future plans. Brendan Donovan, a Gold Glove winner, is set to bring his gritty game and on-base moxie to second, unless rookie Thomas Saggese hits his way into being a right-handed complement or Nolan Gorman's power manifests and makes him the replacement. What happens at second turns on other positions.

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

SS	Masyn Winn (R)
2B	Brendan Donovan (L)
1B	Willson Contreras (R)
3B	Nolan Arenado (R)
LF	Lars Nootbaar (L)
DH	Alec Burleson (L)
RF	Jordan Walker (R)
CF	Michael Siani (L)
C	Iván Herrera (R)

■ BENCH

INF	Nolan Gorman (L)
INF	Thomas Saggese (R)
C	Pedro Pagés (R)
1B	Luken Baker (R)

■ ROTATION

RHP	Sonny Gray
RHP	Erick Fedde
RHP	Miles Mikolas
LHP	Steven Matz
RHP	Andre Pallante

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Ryan Helsley (C)
RHP	Ryan Fernandez
LHP	JoJo Romero
RHP	Michael McGreevy
LHP	Matthew Liberatore
LHP	John King
RHP	Gordon Graceffo
RHP	Riley O'Brien

CORNERS

The Cardinals spent the offseason discussing trades for Arenado to cut salary and create playing time at third for a young player like Gorman. They would have explored the same at first base if not for Willson Contreras' preference to use his no-trade clause to remain in St. Louis. He was willing to move positions — from catcher to first base. He believes a new glove in the field will reduce wear and tear to keep his bat in the lineup, and his .468 slugging and .848 OPS in 2024 would've ranked fourth among first basemen. The cornerstones

are where the shift will be most dramatic, as the Cardinals could go from Arenado's and Goldschmidt's combined 14 Gold Gloves and 15 All-Star invites to Gorman and Contreras, who have 16 starts in the majors combined at third and first.



Ryan Helsley

OUTFIELD

After years of rotating through in-house outfielders only to watch Randy Arozarena, Lane Thomas, Tyler O'Neill and Adolis García thrive in other lineups, the Cardinals now pledge patience to see if playing time yields performance. The leading candidates to benefit (and emerge) are Lars Nootbaar, a left-handed threat with a keen feel for the strike zone who has had injuries interrupt recent seasons, and Jordan Walker, a right-handed first-rounder who needs to get his hits off the ground to truly take flight. Nootbaar may get a run in center, but the Cardinals plan to lean toward defense and a race for starts between deft fielder Michael Siani and Triple-A speedster Victor Scott II. The Cardinals are hoping that this group will prosper, putting an end to their carousel. If not, cue the calliope.

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE CARDINALS "It's weird to see small crowds there, but you understand why. This is a team that's lost its way. They mishandle guys, their guys get better when they leave — it seems like a pattern of poor leadership, and they're not willing to rip off the Band-Aid and start fresh. It's encouraging, at least, that they seem committed to revamping their player development operation because that's long overdue. They have a patchwork pitching staff, but Sonny Gray and Erick Fedde will compete, and Ryan Helsley has a big arm and an elite, hard cutter. Masyn Winn is a very solid player, and I think Alec Burleson can break out as a star; he's got power, and he's not all pull. Michael Siani is fast and fearless in center field, but I worry that he's reckless out there, and as a singles hitter, he needs to get on base more to have any real value offensively. They have some guys, but it all doesn't seem to add up."

CATCHING

Contreras' relocation to first base clears the plate for two young catchers, Iván Herrera and Pedro Pagés, to split the starts. Their skills mesh, and how each improves will be the deciding factor. Herrera, the more lauded prospect, has a knack for contact and upside as a hitter. His assignment in winter ball was to enhance his receiving and arm strength after allowing 55 stolen bases on 59 attempts. While Pagés seeks more sock from his swing, he is a sure-handed backstop whose framing quickly earned the trust of veteran starters. They'll get the playing time to prove who has the blend, or the answer could be on the horizon in rising prospect Jimmy Crooks.

DH/BENCH

When not spelling a corner outfielder or Contreras at first, Alec Burleson looks to turn last season's significant stride into a breakout leap at DH. Difficult to strike out (96th percentile), Burleson hit 21 homers and saw his slugging on off-speed pitches soar from .257 to .598, often providing the Cardinals' steadyest source of power. If not in the infield, Gorman will vie for at-bats at DH. A limited and inexperienced bench still needs to identify a backup shortstop and, come spring, seek the added seasoning of a vet.

MANAGEMENT

Oliver Marmol's first three seasons as manager sure have been eventful. Entering his first year of a contract extension, the expectations for Marmol are more nuanced but no less demanding. During Mozeliak's 17 years atop baseball ops, the Cardinals have hoisted two pennants, won the 2011 World Series, posted 15 consecutive winning seasons and once had the rare double of a championship and top-rated farm system. His final year may be geared toward what comes next, but "Mo" has a few moves in mind that could add luster to his legacy.

FINAL ANALYSIS

Cardinals officials have studiously avoided using buzzwords like "rebuild" to describe their approach, again straddling the fence between all-in and bowing out. Their commitment to youth is actually a bet that they'll be better because of that youth. They don't believe they need to raze the roster to raise the next contender. "I think we'll surprise a few people," says Mozeliak.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

CHAIM TIME Executive Chaim Bloom has an entire year to modernize, reimagine and expand the Cardinals' farm system so that it's ready just in time for him to take over baseball operations. Bloom, who ran the Red Sox and was part of the innovation juggernaut at Tampa Bay, joined the Cardinals as an advisor for 2024 and audited the farm system. His task for 2025 is to enact his recommendations — and then, in November, become president of baseball operations, replacing longtime exec John Mozeliak. Bloom signed a five-year contract that begins with 2026.

LOTTERY TICKET The Cardinals defied the odds and landed their highest draft pick since 1998, the summer they drafted J.D. Drew. With a better record in 2024 and worse chances of a top-six pick, the Cardinals vaulted in MLB's Draft Lottery from the expected 13th pick to the No. 5 pick, leapfrogging teams with losing records in '24. The surprise rise gives them a top-10 pick in back-to-back drafts for the first time in club history (they picked seventh in 2024).

'11 REUNION Jon Jay, a fixture in the outfield during the Cardinals' run of four consecutive NLCS appearances and two pennants, returns as a coach who will work with the next generation of homegrown outfielders. Jay reunites with "Memphis Mafia" pal Daniel Descalso, the second-year bench coach. They combined to lure back their close friend and former teammate David Freese, the MVP of the 2011 World Series, as a guest instructor for spring training.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27 MIN	28	29 MIN
30 MIN	31 LAA	1 LAA	2 LAA	3	4 BOS	5 BOS
6 BOS	7 PIT	8 PIT	9 PIT	10	11 PHI	12 PHI
13 PHI	14 HOU	15 HOU	16 HOU	17 NYM	18 NYM	19 NYM
20 NYM	21 ATL	22 ATL	23 ATL	24	25 MIL	26 MIL
27 MIL	28 CIN	29 CIN	30 CIN			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 CIN	2 NYM	3 NYM
4 NYM	5 PIT	6 PIT	7 PIT	8	9 WAS	10 WAS
11 WAS	12 PHI	13 PHI	14 PHI	15	16 KC	17 KC
18 KC	19 DET	20 DET	21 DET	22	23 ARI	24 ARI
25 ARI	26 BAL	27 BAL	28 BAL	29	30 TEX	31 TEX
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 TEX	2	3 KC	4 KC	5 KC	6 LAD	7 LAD
8 LAD	9 TOR	10 TOR	11 TOR	12 MIL	13 MIL	14 MIL
15 MIL	16	17 CWS	18 CWS	19 CWS	20 CIN	21 CIN
22 CIN	23 CHC	24 CHC	25 CHC	26 CHC	27 CLE	28 CLE
29 CLE	30 PIT					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 PIT	2 PIT	3	4 CHC	5 CHC
6 CHC	7	8 WAS	9 WAS	10 WAS	11 ATL	12 ATL
13 ATL	14	15 ALL-STAR BREAK	16	17	18 ARZ	19 ARZ
20 ARZ	21 COL	22 COL	23 COL	24 SD	25 SD	26 SD
27 SD	28 MIA	29 MIA	30 MIA	31		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 SD	2 SD
3 SD	4 LAD	5 LAD	6 LAD	7	8 CHC	9 CHC
10 CHC	11 COL	12 COL	13 COL	14	15 NYY	16 NYY
17 NYY	18 MIA	19 MIA	20 MIA	21	22 TB	23 TB
24 TB	25 PIT	26 PIT	27 PIT	28 PIT	29 CIN	30 CIN
31 CIN						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 A's	2 A's	3 A's	4	5 SF	6 SF
7 SF	8 SEA	9 SEA	10 SEA	11	12 MIL	13 MIL
14 MIL	15 CIN	16 CIN	17 CIN	18	19 MIL	20 MIL
21 MIL	22 SF	23 SF	24 SF	25	26 CHC	27 CHC
28 CHC	29	30				

STATISTICIAN

.342 Cardinals' slugging percentage with runners in scoring position, lowest in at least two decades and anchored by MLB-low 27 homers in RISP spots.

1,443 Wins during John Mozeliak's tenure (2007-present) leading baseball operations, the fourth-most in the majors in that span.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. JJ Wetherholt, INF (22)**
Natural hitter could rocket to Double-A.

■ **2. Quinn Mathews, LHP (24)**
Baseball America's Minor League Pitcher of the Year.

■ **3. Thomas Saggese, INF (22)**
2023 Texas League MVP had 46 extra-base hits at Triple-A.

■ **4. Tink Hence, RHP (22)** 95 mph fastball and sinister, sweeping slider belie his slight frame.

■ **5. Chase Davis, OF (23)** Return to Double-A primes Davis for breakout opportunity.

■ **6. Yairo Padilla, SS (17)**
Electric switch-hitter with lithe, projectible frame.

■ **7. Jimmy Crooks, C (23)** Adjusted his approach to become a stout, top-shelf framer.

■ **8. Michael McGreevy, RHP (24)** Vaulted into 2025 plans with a strong cameo in the majors.

■ **9. Tekoah Roby, RHP (23)** Has a 99 mph fastball, hammer curve and easy mechanics.

■ **10. Cooper Hjerpe, LHP (24)**
Sports a sweeper, fastball, cutter and biting changeup.

Cardinals Roster

President of Baseball Operations: John Mozeliak • Manager: Oliver Marmol • Coaches: Brandon Allen (asst. hitting), Dusty Blake (pitching), Brant Brown (hitting), Stubby Clapp (first base), Daniel Descalso (bench), Packy Elkins (game planning), Jon Jay, Dean Kiekhefer (asst. pitching), Jamie Pogue (asst. major league/bullpen), Julio Rangel (asst. pitching/bullpen), Turner Ward (hitting), Ron Warner (third base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
12	Erick Fedde	R-R	6-4	205	2/25/93	ST. LOUIS	2-5	3.72	10	10	0	55.2	49	18	46	
						CHICAGO AL	7-4	3.11	21	21	0	121.2	105	34	108	
64	Ryan Fernandez	R-R	6-0	200	6/11/98	ST. LOUIS	1-6	3.51	62	0	2	66.2	58	32	71	
67	Gordon Graceffo	R-R	6-4	220	3/17/00	ST. LOUIS	0-1	4.70	2	1	0	7.2	7	2	6	
						Memphis (AAA)	10-8	4.85	27	26	0	130.0	152	50	107	
54	Sonny Gray	R-R	5-10	190	11/7/89	ST. LOUIS	13-9	3.84	28	28	0	166.1	142	39	203	
56	Ryan Helsley	R-R	6-2	235	7/18/94	ST. LOUIS	7-4	2.04	65	0	49	66.1	50	23	79	
	Tink Hence	R-R	6-1	195	8/6/02	Springfield (AA)	4-3	2.71	20	20	0	79.2	59	26	109	
47	John King	L-L	6-2	215	9/14/94	ST. LOUIS	3-3	2.85	56	0	0	60.0	58	14	38	
						Memphis (AAA)	1-0	3.38	6	0	2	5.1	6	0	5	
62	Kyle Leahy	S-R	6-5	225	6/4/97	ST. LOUIS	1-1	4.07	33	0	1	48.2	40	10	33	
						Memphis (AAA)	0-4	3.86	16	0	0	28.0	30	8	31	
52	Matthew Liberatore	L-L	6-4	215	11/6/99	ST. LOUIS	3-4	4.40	60	6	0	86.0	81	28	76	
68	Ryan Loutos	R-R	6-5	240	1/29/99	ST. LOUIS	0-0	0.00	3	0	0	2.1	2	1	0	
						Memphis (AAA)	3-1	3.40	47	0	18	53.0	53	23	59	
32	Steven Matz	R-L	6-2	205	5/29/91	ST. LOUIS	1-2	5.08	12	7	0	44.1	49	15	33	
						Memphis (AAA)	0-1	3.91	7	7	0	23.0	24	5	19	
						Springfield (AA)	0-1	0.00	2	2	0	4.2	3	1	8	
36	Michael McGreevy	L-R	6-4	220	7/8/00	ST. LOUIS	3-0	1.96	4	3	0	23.0	16	2	18	
						Memphis (AAA)	9-8	4.02	27	27	0	150.0	152	44	138	
39	Miles Mikolas	R-R	6-4	230	8/23/88	ST. LOUIS	10-11	5.35	32	32	0	171.2	194	25	122	
	Rodderly Muñoz	R-R	6-2	210	4/14/00	MIAMI	2-7	6.53	18	17	0	82.2	89	42	70	
						Jacksonville (AAA)	4-4	4.96	12	8	0	49.0	38	24	43	
55	Riley O’Brien	R-R	6-4	180	2/6/95	ST. LOUIS	0-0	11.25	8	0	0	8.0	13	8	11	
						Memphis (AAA)	1-0	1.35	14	0	1	13.1	8	5	9	
53	Andre Pallante	R-R	6-0	215	9/18/98	ST. LOUIS	8-8	3.78	29	20	0	121.1	110	48	94	
						Memphis (AAA)	1-0	2.20	4	3	0	16.1	14	13	9	
61	Sem Robberse	R-R	6-1	195	10/12/01	Memphis (AAA)	5-4	4.59	16	14	0	84.1	76	27	76	
						Palm Beach (A)	0-1	1.50	3	3	0	6.0	9	1	4	
	Tekoah Roby	R-R	6-1	210	9/18/01	Springfield (AA)	2-2	6.75	7	7	0	33.1	43	12	33	
						Palm Beach (A)	0-1	5.40	3	3	0	5.0	4	3	6	
59	JoJo Romero	L-L	5-11	215	9/9/96	ST. LOUIS	7-3	3.36	65	0	1	59.0	52	16	51	
58	Chris Roycroft	R-R	6-8	230	6/21/97	ST. LOUIS	1-2	4.19	27	0	0	34.1	31	17	33	
						Memphis (AAA)	3-4	2.17	36	0	6	45.2	41	18	45	
	Matt Svanson	R-R	6-5	235	1/31/99	Springfield (AA)	4-3	2.69	53	0	27	63.2	68	25	59	
57	Zack Thompson	L-L	6-2	215	10/28/97	ST. LOUIS	0-2	9.53	5	2	0	17.0	24	8	20	
						Memphis (AAA)	4-6	4.40	21	20	0	90.0	68	56	108	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
48	Iván Herrera	R-R	5-11	220	6/1/00	ST. LOUIS	.301	72	229	37	69	5	27	25	53	5
						Memphis (AAA)	.280	27	93	18	26	5	16	19	20	3
43	Pedro Pagés	R-R	6-1	245	9/17/98	ST. LOUIS	.238	68	202	19	48	7	27	13	58	2
						Memphis (AAA)	.222	7	18	3	4	1	2	5	5	0
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
28	Nolan Arenado	R-R	6-2	215	4/16/91	ST. LOUIS	.272	152	578	70	157	16	71	44	92	2
26	Luken Baker	R-R	6-4	285	3/10/97	ST. LOUIS	.175	21	40	3	7	2	10	7	11	1
						Memphis (AAA)	.231	108	376	54	87	32	79	67	110	0
40	Willson Contreras	R-R	6-1	240	5/13/92	ST. LOUIS	.262	84	301	48	79	15	36	45	96	4
						Memphis (AAA)	.143	6	21	2	3	0	1	1	5	0
33	Brendan Donovan	L-R	6-1	210	1/16/97	ST. LOUIS	.278	153	587	65	163	14	73	47	81	5
15	José Fermín	R-R	5-9	198	3/29/99	ST. LOUIS	.155	45	71	7	11	0	4	7	11	2
						Memphis (AAA)	.311	61	196	40	61	8	27	34	22	18
16	Nolan Gorman	L-R	6-1	225	5/10/00	ST. LOUIS	.203	107	365	42	74	19	50	34	151	6
						Memphis (AAA)	.205	23	88	16	18	7	16	9	23	0
25	Thomas Saggese	R-R	5-11	185	4/10/02	ST. LOUIS	.204	18	49	5	10	1	4	2	14	0
						Memphis (AAA)	.253	125	479	75	121	20	67	31	122	9
0	Masyn Winn	R-R	5-11	185	3/21/02	ST. LOUIS	.267	150	587	85	157	15	57	41	109	11
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
41	Alec Burleson	L-L	6-2	225	11/25/98	ST. LOUIS	.269	152	547	71	147	21	78	35	76	9
	Matt Koperniak	L-R	6-0	208	2/8/98	Memphis (AAA)	.309	122	463	64	143	20	73	43	96	5
21	Lars Nootbaar	L-R	6-3	205	9/8/97	ST. LOUIS	.244	109	348	39	85	12	45	52	79	7
						Memphis (AAA)	.176	5	17	5	3	0	1	3	4	0
						Springfield (AA)	.259	8	27	6	7	2	4	7	9	0
11	Victor Scott II	L-L	5-11	190	2/12/01	ST. LOUIS	.179	53	145	14	26	2	10	6	42	5
						Memphis (AAA)	.210	81	314	39	66	6	30	36	57	30
63	Michael Siani	L-L	6-1	195	7/16/99	ST. LOUIS	.228	124	298	42	68	2	20	21	92	20
						Springfield (AA)	.100	4	10	1	1	0	0	5	2	1
18	Jordan Walker	R-R	6-6	250	5/22/02	ST. LOUIS	.201	51	164	16	33	5	20	10	50	1
						Memphis (AAA)	.263	84	342	37	90	9	37	31	73	4

Arizona DIAMONDBACKS

2025 PREDICTION
3RD
NL WEST
2024 FINISH: 3RD (89-73)

The Arizona Diamondbacks are all in. They strode aggressively into the offseason by signing free-agent righthander Corbin Burnes and trading for first baseman Josh Naylor, moves that could nudge them toward the National League elite after a frustrating 2024 in which they missed the playoffs by losing two tiebreakers. Owner Ken Kendrick's six-year, \$210 million commitment to Burnes shocked the industry and addressed a need. Naylor will help compensate for the loss of free agent Christian Walker and others from an offense that led the majors in runs in 2024. Manager Torey Lovullo's team has speed on the bases and can catch the ball, ingredients that always play well. After 84 and 89 wins the past two seasons, the D-backs appear to be on an upward trajectory.



Corbin Carroll

ROTATION

Burnes was a major get and will plug right in at the top of the rotation as arguably the best free-agent pitcher on the market. Burnes will head a staff that also includes quality righthanders Zac Gallen and Merrill Kelly, who have been the heart of the rotation since 2020. Burnes, 30, was his usual self in Baltimore a year ago — 15-9 with a 2.92 ERA over 194.1 innings. Since joining the Brewers' rotation for good in 2020, Burnes is second in the majors in ERA (2.88) among those with 500 innings, second in strikeouts (946) and third in innings (816.2). The 2021 NL Cy Young winner brings a package of success, durability and consistency that is hard to ignore. New No. 2 Gallen is 43-19 since 2022 and has finished in the top 10 in NL Cy Young voting three times. No. 3 Kelly had 25 victories in 2022-23, although injuries have limited him in the past two seasons. He made only 13 starts a year ago because of a shoulder strain. Lefthander Eduardo Rodriguez and righties Brandon Pfaadt and Ryne Nelson are the main contenders for the final rotation spots, although Jordan Montgomery is in the mix. Rodriguez was the D-backs' big free-agent signing the previous winter, but a lat strain limited him to 10 starts.

BULLPEN

Justin Martinez, 23, has the type of power arm that teams prefer in a ninth-inning specialist. Martinez's four-seam fastball averaged 100.5 mph, second in the majors to Oakland's Mason Miller (100.9) according to Statcast, and he converted eight of nine save opportunities after taking over as the full-time closer in August. Righthander Kevin Ginkel and lefthander A.J. Puk are relatable setup men, and Puk had a remarkable 1.32 ERA after being acquired from Miami at the trade deadline. Puk, 29, has 22 career saves, including two with Arizona last year, should a need arise. Same with Ginkel. Side-arming righthander Ryan Thompson and lefthander Joe Mantiply provide situational options, and they were among the 10 pitchers who recorded a save as the D-backs sorted their bullpen a year ago. Montgomery is a wild card. He flopped after missing spring training a year ago and was moved to the bullpen down the stretch. He is a candidate to work as an innings-eater in long relief if he does not stick in the rotation.

Chase Field

Opened: 1998 • Capacity: 48,633
Left: 330' Center: 407' Right: 335'
Tickets: 602-514-8400
mlb.com/DBACKS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Highest single-season Base Running value, 2015-24		
1. 2023 Corbin Carroll, D-backs	12.3	
2. 2024 Corbin Carroll, D-backs	11.1	
3. 2017 Billy Hamilton, Reds	10.7	
4. 2021 Starling Marte, Marlins/A's	10.2	
5. 2024 Shohei Ohtani, Dodgers	9.8	

MIDDLE INFIELD

Ketel Marte established himself in the top tier of NL second basemen with a career year in 2024 that included a third-place finish in the MVP race. At 32 there is no reason to believe Marte cannot ride the same train. Marte set career highs with 36 homers, 95 RBIs and a 155 OPS+ despite playing only 136 games because of a nagging ankle sprain. He saved four defensive runs above average, according to Baseball Reference, and he is equipped with a shortstop's arm. Shortstop Geraldo Perdomo is also a plus defender (two runs saved) and is growing into his gap power at age 25 after coming off a season with a career-high 21 doubles. Like Marte, Perdomo is a switch-hitter, giving the D-backs plenty of matchup flexibility with their lineup.

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

RF	Corbin Carroll (L)
2B	Ketel Marte (S)
LF	Lourdes Gurriel Jr. (R)
1B	Josh Naylor (L)
3B	Eugenio Suárez (R)
CF	Jake McCarthy (L)
C	Gabriel Moreno (R)
DH	Pavin Smith (L)
SS	Gerardo Perdomo (S)

■ BENCH

C/DH	Adrian Del Castillo (L)
OF	Alek Thomas (L)
IF	Blaze Alexander (R)
C	Jose Herrera (S)

■ ROTATION

RHP	Corbin Burnes
RHP	Zac Gallen
RHP	Merrill Kelly
LHP	Eduardo Rodriguez
RHP	Brandon Pfaadt
RHP	Ryne Nelson

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Justin Martinez (C)
RHP	Kevin Ginkel
LHP	A.J. Puk
RHP	Ryan Thompson
LHP	Joe Mantiplay
RHP	Bryce Jarvis
LHP	Jordan Montgomery

CORNERS

First baseman Naylor and third baseman Eugenio Suárez bring 30-home run power to a park that favors offense. Naylor set career-highs with 31 home runs and 108 RBIs as a first-time All-Star with Cleveland a year ago, and he has 5.8 WAR over the last three seasons. His average exit velocity (89.9) was higher than that of Pete Alonso and Freddie Freeman a year ago. The D-backs were quick to exercise Suárez's \$15 million 2025 option after he had 30 homers and 101 RBIs in his first season in Arizona. Suárez graded out at minus-four in runs saved a year ago, his fourth consecutive season in negative numbers, but the D-backs prioritized his production.



Ketel Marte

OUTFIELD

Corbin Carroll, the 2023 NL Rookie of the Year, split his time equally between center field and right field in his second season but will slot in as the full-time right fielder now that Jake McCarthy has emerged in center. Carroll has the speed/power combination that is built for the new game. He has led the NL in triples the last two seasons, including a major league-high 14 a year ago, and has 89 stolen bases. After discarding an offseason swing change that caused a mini-slump early, Carroll finished with 22 homers and 74 RBIs, with 17 homers coming after the All-Star break. Left fielder Lourdes Gurriel Jr. is a consistent bat and a plus defender in the unconventional dimensions of Chase Field, where

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE DIAMONDBACKS "Geraldo Perdomo is the heart and soul of that team; he's unquestionably their leader. Ketel Marte is an MVP candidate at second, and Gabriel Moreno is one of the best two or three catchers in baseball, so they're really strong up the middle. Corbin Carroll started slowly last year because he spent too much time stressing about hitting the high fastball; he was back to being himself in the second half. They lost a lot of punch with Christian Walker and Joc Pederson leaving but did well in getting Josh Naylor for first base. Merrill Kelly's pitchability is off the charts, but best-case scenario is he'll give you 20 starts. If this team doesn't contend, expect to hear Zac Gallen's name in trade rumors; they don't want to deal him, but he's a free agent after the season. Brandon Pfaadt and Ryne Nelson had strong development years, but I don't know how badly Eduardo Rodriguez really wants it. A.J. Puk is terrific in the bullpen, and Justin Martinez had a breakout year. They need more durable, reliable guys in that pen; Yilber Diaz has been a starter in the minors, but he'd be a good fit there."

a notch in the fence near the D-backs' bullpen creates unusual caroms. He saved six runs last season and 16 the year before. McCarthy, always a plus runner and defender, has grown with his offensive approach.

CATCHING

Gabriel Moreno, 25, is a solid two-way receiver after getting regular playing time following this trade from Toronto before the 2023 season. Moreno's gap power translated into five homers and 45 RBIs a year ago, and he is one of the best in the league behind the plate. He won a Gold Glove in 2023 when he caught 38.6 percent of potential base-stealers, and he caught 28.6 percent last season with a pop time that is above major league average.

DH/BENCH

First baseman/outfielder Pavin Smith and catcher Adrian Del Castillo are the primary DH candidates after the loss of platoon free agents Joc Pederson and Randal Grichuk, although both are left-handed hitters. Del Castillo was the Triple-A Pacific Coast League MVP, and he hit well in a short stint in the majors. There are other DH options. A natural first baseman, Smith could play there to give Naylor a half-day off. Same in the outfield, where center fielder Alek Thomas is considered a top defender; when he starts, he could give Gurriel a turn at DH. Blaze Alexander can play all over the infield, and his first career start was as a DH. Catcher Jose Herrera is a defense-first option behind the plate.

MANAGEMENT

Money has never been an object to Kendrick, whose competitive desire was whetted by the young D-backs' unexpected trip to the 2023 World Series. Kendrick blamed himself for pushing to sign Montgomery last spring, but that did not deter Kendrick this time — Burnes' contract is the largest in team history. General manager Mike Hazen has been aggressive in acquiring talent, especially at the trade deadline, without sacrificing future pieces.

FINAL ANALYSIS

The Diamondbacks went big in an attempt to push through last season's disappointment. Competing with the free-spending Dodgers is not easy, but the D-backs relish it. They are the last team to beat the Dodgers in the postseason, sweeping the 2023 NLDS, and Burnes' addition should reinforce their swagger.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

CANNOT SPELL D-BACKS WITHOUT 'D' The D-backs' emphasis on quickness and athleticism on defense has translated into a record-setting stretch. Arizona was charged with 62 errors in 2024 after being charged with a franchise-record low 56 in 2023, becoming the first team in modern major league history (since 1900) to have consecutive seasons of 65 or fewer errors, according to Elias.

YOUTH SHALL BE SERVED Corbin Carroll had 22 homers and 35 stolen bases in 2024, when he joined Mike Trout and Bobby Witt Jr. as the only players with consecutive seasons of 20 homers and 30 stolen bases in their age-23 seasons or younger in major league history. The history did not stop there — Carroll, Witt, Willie Mays and Andy Van Slyke are the only players with 20 homers, 30 stolen bases and 10 triples in consecutive seasons, according to OptaStats.

MARTE PARTAY Ketel Marte lapped the field to win his first National League Silver Slugger Award a year ago. Marte led major league second basemen in home runs (36), RBIs (95), total bases (282), OPS (.922) and WAR (6.8). No other NL second baseman had more than 19 homers or 70 RBIs. Marte was the first D-back to win a Silver Slugger since first baseman Paul Goldschmidt in 2018, when he won the third of his five Silver Sluggers in his last season in the desert. The award is legit — it is voted on by the manager and three coaches from each NL team.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27	28	29
				CHC	CHC	CHC
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
CHC		NYN	NYN	NYN	WAS	WAS
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
WAS	BAL	BAL	BAL		MIL	MIL
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
MIL		MIA	MIA	MIA	CHC	CHC
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
CHC		TB	TB	TB	ATL	ATL
27	28	29	30			
ATL		NYM	NYM			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
				NYM	PHI	PHI
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PHI	NYM	NYM	NYM	LAD	LAD	LAD
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
LAD	SF	SF	SF		COL	COL
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
COL	LAD	LAD	LAD		STL	STL
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
STL	PIT	PIT	PIT		WAS	WAS
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
WAS		ATL	ATL	ATL	CIN	CIN
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
CIN	SEA	SEA	SEA		SD	SD
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
SD		TOR	TOR	TOR	COL	COL
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
COL	CWS	CWS	CWS		MIA	MIA
29	30					
MIA	SF					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		SF	SF	SF	KC	KC
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
KC	SD	SD	SD	SD	LAA	LAA
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
LAA		ALL-STAR BREAK			STL	STL
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
STL	HOU	HOU	HOU		PIT	PIT
27	28	29	30	31		
PIT	DET	DET	DET			
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
					A's	A's
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A's	SD	SD	SD		COL	COL
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
COL	TEX	TEX	TEX	COL	COL	COL
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
COL	CLE	CLE	CLE		CIN	CIN
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
CIN	MIL	MIL	MIL	MIL	LAD	LAD
31						
LAD						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	TEX	TEX	TEX		BOS	BOS
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
BOS	SF	SF	SF		MIN	MIN
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
MIN	SF	SF	SF		PHI	PHI
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
PHI		LAD	LAD	LAD	SD	SD
28	29	30				
SD						

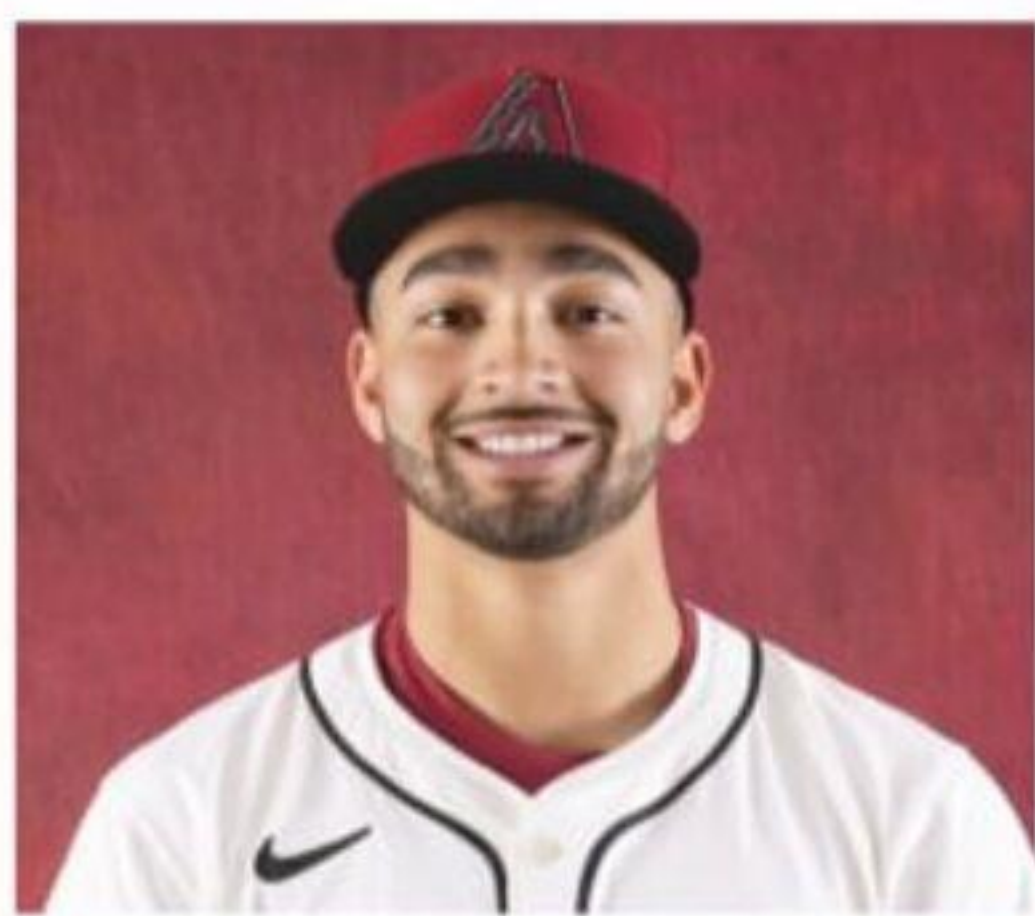
STATISTICIAN

21.7 Corbin Burnes' WAR since 2020, second-best in the majors according to FanGraphs.

886 Runs scored by the Diamondbacks last season, a major-league high.

16.6 Josh Naylor's strikeout rate in 2023, sixth-lowest among qualified left-handed hitters.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Jordan Lawlar, SS (22)**
Elite power/speed combo; he simply needs health.

■ **2. Yilber Diaz, RHP (24)** Has a fastball that touches 99 mph and swing-and-miss slider.

■ **3. Demetrio Crisantes, 2B (20)** Combines line-drive power, speed and strike zone knowledge.

■ **4. Slade Caldwell, OF (18)**
Has compact swing, strike-zone awareness and plus-plus speed.

■ **5. Druw Jones, OF (21)** Son of Andruw Jones has raw tools.

■ **6. Adrian Del Castillo, C (25)**
Defensive challenges eventually could lead to a position change.

■ **7. Tommy Troy, 2B (23)** 2023 first-rounder has impact bat, well-rounded profile.

■ **8. Ryan Waldschmidt, OF (22)** 31st pick in July profiles as power-hitting corner outfielder.

■ **9. Jansel Luis, SS (20)** Had 46 extra-base hits in his first full minor league season in 2024.

■ **10. Gino Groover, 3B (22)**
He missed three months with a broken left wrist last year but showed well when he returned.

Diamondbacks Roster

Executive Vice President and General Manager: Mike Hazen • Manager: Torey Lovullo • Coaches: Jeff Banister (bench), Wellington Cepeda (bullpen), Travis Denker (asst. hitting), Owen Dew (asst. pitching), Brian Kaplan (pitching), Shaun Larkin (third base/infield), Joe Mather (hitting), Dave McKay (first base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
39	Corbin Burnes	R-R	6-3	245	10/22/94	BALTIMORE	15-9	2.92	32	32	0	194.1	165	48	181	
45	Yilber Diaz	R-R	6-0	190	8/19/00	ARIZONA	1-1	3.81	7	4	0	28.1	27	12	19	
						Reno (AAA)	3-4	3.22	10	8	0	50.1	47	18	63	
						Amarillo (AA)	3-5	4.33	11	11	0	54.0	38	29	77	
	Joe Elbis	R-R	6-1	150	9/24/02	Amarillo (AA)	0-3	4.60	8	8	0	45.0	40	18	37	
						Hillsboro (A+)	7-3	2.79	16	16	0	90.1	74	29	75	
23	Zac Gallen	R-R	6-2	189	8/3/95	ARIZONA	14-6	3.65	28	28	0	148.0	133	54	156	
37	Kevin Ginkel	L-R	6-4	235	3/24/94	ARIZONA	8-3	3.21	72	0	5	70.0	69	15	77	
47	Tommy Henry	L-L	6-3	205	7/29/97	ARIZONA	2-3	7.04	9	7	0	38.1	49	18	30	
						Reno (AAA)	10-1	4.25	20	20	0	108.0	109	54	114	
99	Drey Jameson	R-R	6-0	165	8/17/97	INJURED — Missed Season										
40	Bryce Jarvis	L-R	6-2	195	12/26/97	ARIZONA	1-2	3.19	44	0	0	59.1	52	33	38	
29	Merrill Kelly	R-R	6-2	202	10/14/88	ARIZONA	5-1	4.03	13	13	0	73.2	67	19	63	
						Hillsboro (A+)	0-0	6.75	1	1	0	4.0	6	0	2	
35	Joe Mantiplay	R-L	6-4	219	3/1/91	ARIZONA	6-2	3.92	75	2	1	59.2	52	18	53	
63	Justin Martinez	R-R	6-3	180	7/30/01	ARIZONA	5-6	2.48	64	0	8	72.2	59	36	91	
						Reno (AAA)	0-0	2.70	6	0	3	6.2	4	3	14	
	Seth Martinez	R-R	6-2	193	8/29/94	HOUSTON	3-2	3.59	44	0	1	52.2	49	18	36	
						Sugar Land (AAA)	0-0	1.46	13	0	0	12.1	6	7	12	
64	Cristian Mena	R-R	6-2	170	12/21/02	ARIZONA	0-0	12.00	1	1	0	3.0	4	3	2	
						Reno (AAA)	4-2	4.61	19	19	0	95.2	101	46	102	
52	Jordan Montgomery	L-L	6-6	228	12/27/92	ARIZONA	8-7	6.23	25	21	1	117.0	149	44	83	
						Reno (AAA)	0-0	10.57	2	2	0	7.2	12	5	9	
24	Kyle Nelson	L-L	6-1	175	7/8/96	ARIZONA	0-0	4.22	11	0	0	10.2	8	4	8	
19	Ryne Nelson	R-R	6-3	184	2/1/98	ARIZONA	10-6	4.24	28	25	1	150.2	155	34	126	
32	Brandon Pfaadt	R-R	6-4	220	10/15/98	ARIZONA	11-10	4.71	32	32	0	181.2	183	42	185	
33	A.J. Puk	L-L	6-7	248	4/25/95	ARIZONA	0-1	1.32	30	0	2	27.1	15	5	43	
						MIAMI	4-8	4.30	32	4	1	44.0	36	23	45	
						Jacksonville (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	0	3	
						Jupiter (A)	0-0	10.80	2	0	0	1.2	3	0	2	
						FCL Marlins (R)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	0	2	
57	Eduardo Rodriguez	L-L	6-2	231	4/7/93	ARIZONA	3-4	5.04	10	10	0	50.0	56	19	47	
81	Ryan Thompson	R-R	6-5	210	6/26/92	ARIZONA	7-5	3.26	67	0	2	66.1	64	15	52	
48	Blake Walston	L-L	6-5	175	6/28/01	ARIZONA	1-0	4.42	7	2	0	18.1	16	10	18	
						Reno (AAA)	3-2	4.85	14	13	0	65.0	69	31	68	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
25	Adrian Del Castillo	L-R	5-10	208	9/27/99	ARIZONA	.313	25	80	12	25	4	19	7	28	1
						Reno (AAA)	.312	105	413	90	129	26	75	55	80	0
11	Jose Herrera	S-R	5-9	217	2/24/97	ARIZONA	.227	42	97	11	22	1	13	9	27	0
						Reno (AAA)	.260	37	127	23	33	2	19	19	23	0
14	Gabriel Moreno	R-R	5-11	195	2/14/00	ARIZONA	.266	97	305	39	81	5	45	41	52	3
						ACL D-backs (R)	.500	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
9	Blaze Alexander	R-R	5-11	160	6/11/99	ARIZONA	.247	61	166	19	41	3	21	15	49	3
						Reno (AAA)	.276	51	196	27	54	5	20	19	69	4
10	Jordan Lawlar	R-R	6-1	190	7/17/02	Reno (AAA)	.367	12	49	6	18	2	12	7	17	1
						Amarillo (AA)	.143	2	7	0	1	0	0	2	2	0
						ACL D-backs (R)	.276	9	29	7	8	0	8	5	4	5
	Grae Kessinger	R-R	6-1	204	8/25/97	HOUSTON	.000	23	21	4	0	0	0	3	7	0
						Sugar Land (AAA)	.262	67	263	46	69	6	22	30	68	7
4	Ketel Marte	S-R	6-1	210	10/12/93	ARIZONA	.292	136	504	93	147	36	95	65	106	7
22	Josh Naylor	L-L	5-11	250	6/22/97	CLEVELAND	.243	152	563	84	137	31	108	58	105	6
2	Geraldo Perdomo	S-R	6-2	203	10/22/99	ARIZONA	.273	98	337	61	92	3	37	36	58	9
						Reno (AAA)	.143	4	14	1	2	0	2	2	0	0
						ACL D-backs (R)	.125	3	8	1	1	0	2	2	3	0
28	Eugenio Suárez	R-R	5-11	213	7/18/91	ARIZONA	.256	158	571	90	146	30	101	49	176	2
	Tim Tawa	R-R	6-0	196	4/7/99	Reno (AAA)	.304	37	138	25	42	10	26	13	32	3
						Amarillo (AA)	.270	105	411	62	111	21	64	40	96	11
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
1	Jorge Barrosa	S-L	5-6	165	2/17/01	ARIZONA	.176	8	17	3	3	0	1	0	2	1
						Reno (AAA)	.270	75	285	46	77	8	43	38	59	12
						ACL D-backs (R)	.235	9	34	4	8	1	7	2	7	1
7	Corbin Carroll	L-L	5-10	165	8/21/00	ARIZONA	.231	158	589	121	136	22	74	73	130	35
12	Lourdes Gurriel Jr.	R-R	6-4	215	10/10/93	ARIZONA	.279	133	513	72	143	18	75	29	101	7
31	Jake McCarthy	L-L	6-2	215	7/30/97	ARIZONA	.285	142	442	66	126	8	56	31	78	25
26	Pavin Smith	L-L	6-2	208	2/6/96	ARIZONA	.270	60	137	26	37	9	36	18	31	1
						Reno (AAA)	.318	62	236	51	75	13	51	49	49	1
5	Alek Thomas	L-L	5-11	175	4/28/00	ARIZONA	.189	39	95	13	18	3	17	7	17	4
						Reno (AAA)	.286	16	63	14	18	2	12	5	11	1
						ACL D-backs (R)	.538	5	13	3	7	1	3	2	1	0

Colorado ROCKIES

2025 PREDICTION

5TH

NL WEST

2024 FINISH: 5TH (61-101)

The Rockies believe the worst is over after losing 101 games last year and 103 in 2023. Their rotation, finally healthy, should have a more veteran presence, with at least one stellar prospect likely to debut during the season. Several rookie relievers showed promise in the final weeks of last season, but how they will hold up and perform over a full season is a huge unknown. A lack of power and too many strikeouts plagued the offense. But a core of young players has emerged and, with more experience, may show more strike-zone discipline. The Rockies likely won't be relevant in the formidable NL West. But notable progress is possible this season.

ROTATION

Last season, the Rockies used 12 different starters, and the group's 5.54 ERA was the highest in the majors. Coors Field will always inflate ERAs. But the rotation should be much better. Germán Márquez and Antonio Senzatela both underwent Tommy John surgery in 2023 and pitched sparingly last year. They should be healthy from the outset this season and, along with lefthander Kyle Freeland, give the Rockies three dependable veterans to anchor the rotation. Ryan Feltner, 28, had a breakthrough with a 2.98 ERA in his final 15 starts. Lefty Austin Gomber is a savvy back-end starter. Chase Dollander should make his big-league debut and has the potential to pitch near the top of the rotation. Lefthanders Carson Palmquist and Sean Sullivan could also reach the majors this season.

BULLPEN

Rockies relievers had a 5.41 ERA, highest in the majors and well above the next-worst mark of 4.82, and were the only unit with a strikeout rate below 20 percent (19.6). But six rookie relievers showed promise and exhibited velocity in the waning weeks of the season — Seth Halvorsen, Jaden Hill, lefthander Luis Peralta, Victor Vodnik, Angel Chivilli and Jeff Criswell. Lefthander Lucas Gilbreath briefly returned in August after missing two years following Tommy John surgery and subsequent setbacks, and he should be healthy. Veterans Tyler Kinley, Justin Lawrence and Jake Bird have decent stuff but must be more consistent.

MIDDLE INFIELD

At 23, shortstop Ezequiel Tovar has established himself as a foundational piece. He won a Gold Glove last season in just his second full year in the majors. And late in spring training, the Rockies signed him to a seven-year, \$63.5 million contract with a club option for 2031. Tovar hit a team-leading 26 home runs. He was also first in the National League with 45 doubles, second in extra-base hits (75) and fourth in total bases (307). The Rockies cut ties with second baseman Brendan Rodgers, who never lived up to expectations. They signed free-agent second baseman Thairo Estrada, a good defender who will bring much-needed speed to the lineup. He has thrived at Coors Field and this season could hit 30 doubles and 20 home runs, career-high totals.



Ezequiel Tovar

Coors Field

Opened: 1995 • Capacity: 46,897
Left: 347' Center: 415' Right: 350'
Tickets: 303-ROCKIES
mlb.com/ROCKIES

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Largest difference between ERA and FIP, 2022-24

1. 2022 Rockies	0.70 (5.08 vs. 4.38)
2. 2024 Rockies	0.54 (5.48 vs. 4.94)
3. 2024 D-backs	0.54 (4.63 vs. 4.09)
4. 2023 Royals	0.47 (5.17 vs. 4.70)
5. 2023 Rockies	0.44 (5.68 vs. 5.24)

CORNERS

Third baseman Ryan McMahon has been a Gold Glove finalist four consecutive seasons. While his defense is excellent, his offense has fallen short of expectations. He was an All-Star last year but fell off sharply in the second half. McMahon has hit at least 20 home runs each of the past four seasons. Michael Toglia was optioned to Triple-A twice last season but returned for good in June and became the regular first baseman. His 25 home runs were the most in franchise history by a switch-hitter. While it's unlikely Toglia will hit for average, he can take a positive step by cutting his strikeout rate (31.1 percent in 101 games after his final recall). Toglia is a very polished first baseman, agile for someone 6-foot-5 and adept at digging out low throws.

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

CF	Brenton Doyle (R)
SS	Ezequiel Tovar (R)
DH	Kris Bryant (R)
1B	Michael Toglia (S)
3B	Ryan McMahon (L)
2B	Thairo Estrada (R)
LF	Nolan Jones (L)
C	Jacob Stallings (R)
RF	Jordan Beck (R)

■ BENCH

IF	Kyle Farmer (R)
OF	Sam Hilliard (L)
C/OF/1B	Hunter Goodman (R)
IF	Aaron Schunk (R)

■ ROTATION

LHP	Kyle Freeland
RHP	Germán Márquez
RHP	Antonio Senzatela
RHP	Ryan Feltner
LHP	Austin Gomber

■ BULLPEN

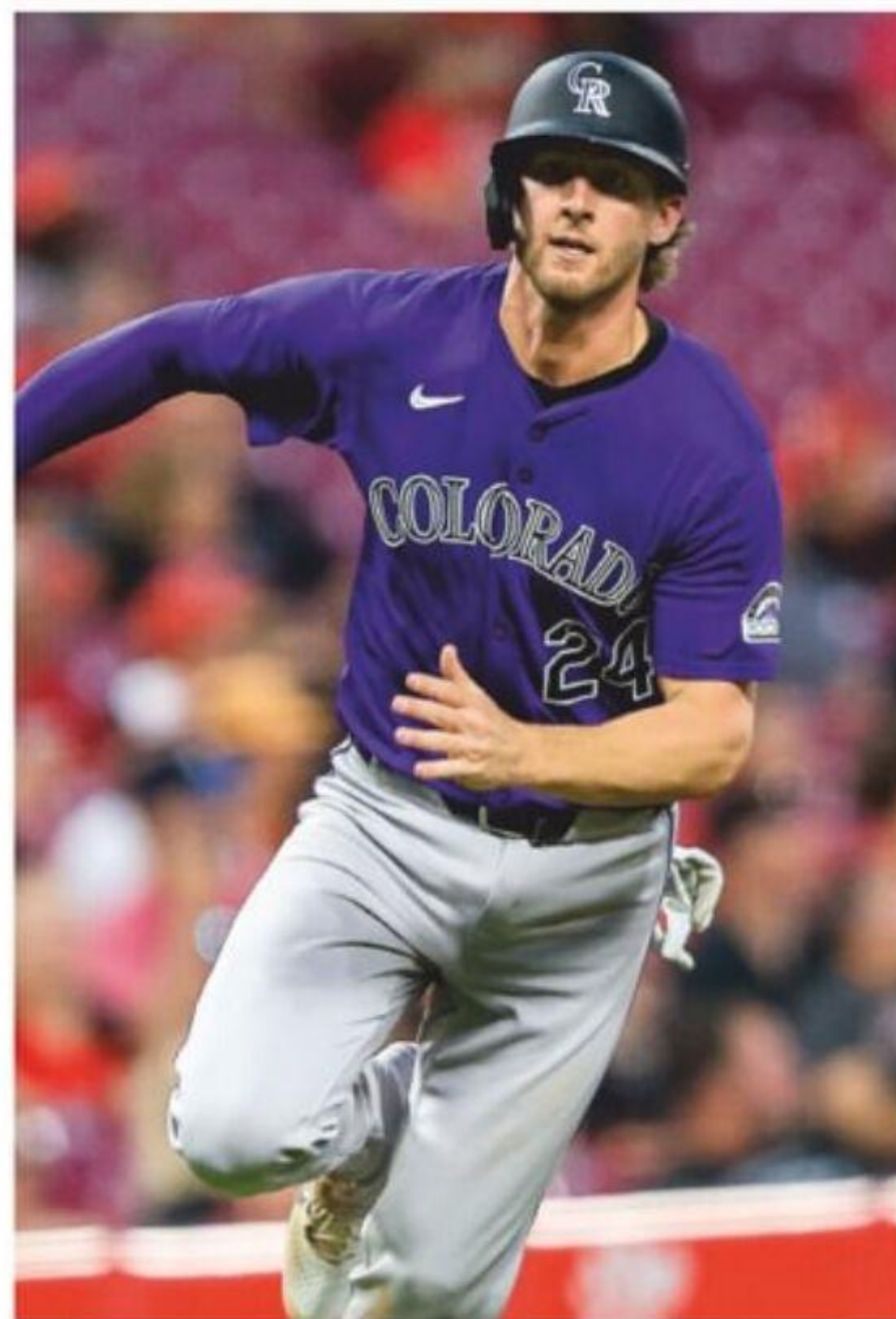
RHP	Victor Vodnik (C)
RHP	Seth Halvorsen
RHP	Tyler Kinley
LHP	Luis Peralta
LHP	Lucas Gilbreath
RHP	Justin Lawrence
RHP	Jake Bird
RHP	Jaden Hill

OUTFIELD

Center fielder Brenton Doyle, 26, has established himself as a franchise cornerstone, winning a Gold Glove in each of his first two seasons in the majors. Minimizing the movement in his swing enabled Doyle to make enormous offensive progress. As a rookie in 2023, Doyle hit .203 with a .593 OPS, 10 home runs and a 35 percent strikeout rate. He improved last season to .260 with a .764 OPS, 23 home runs and a 25.4 percent strikeout rate. Nolan Jones, who was slowed by injuries and performed poorly when in the lineup, will be trying to re-establish his rookie form from 2022 when he hit 20 homers, stole 20 bases and posted a .931 OPS. Jordan Beck made his major-league debut on April 30 but missed 60 games and valuable developmental time in his rookie season when he fractured his left hand on May 26. He runs well, can hit for power and plays very good defense. But he must trim his 35.3 percent strikeout rate and raise his 6.5 percent walk rate.

CATCHING

Jacob Stallings rose from backup to starting catcher after Elias Díaz was released in mid-August. Stallings set career-highs in batting (.263), OPS (.810) and home runs (9) and should easily surpass last year's total of 82 games played. Hunter Goodman can play left and right field and first base as well as catcher. He hit a mere .190 in 70 games but has plus power, as evidenced by his 13 home runs. Drew Romo, a first-round draft pick in 2020 who was promoted from Triple-A after the release of Díaz, played 16 games and was overmatched both at the plate and behind it. The switch-hitting Romo will need a strong spring



Brenton Doyle

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE ROCKIES "It's the same story here — the division is so tough, how do the Rockies ever break the barrier of the Dodgers and the rest? They have a decent staff, but there's not much upside with it outside of Chase Dollander, and he hasn't pitched above Double-A yet. Fortunately, they've got one of the most dynamic defenses out there. Brenton Doyle and Nolan Jones can go and get it in the outfield, and they've both got cannons. Ezequiel Tovar is the best shortstop in the league, and his extra-base power is real, so if he figures out the strike zone, watch out — he can't be over 60 percent swing rate again. I like the infield corners: Ryan McMahon is a stud, and Michael Toglia made good progress at first. Kris Bryant, who knows? That's up there with Anthony Rendon and Javy Báez as the worst contract in baseball."

to challenge Goodman for the backup catching job. Veteran Austin Nola, who signed a minor league contract, could provide depth.

DH/BENCH

Kris Bryant will be the primary DH, if he can stay healthy. After three injury-plagued years, including last year when he played in a career-low 37 games, that’s far from certain. The Rockies need someone who can make a pitcher work and add to his stress by fouling off tough pitches. Ideally, that is Bryant, who went on a regimen late last year to strengthen his back, where he suffers from chronic disc problems and arthritis. Left-handed-hitting Sam Hilliard can play all three outfield positions, runs well and has power, but he strikes out too often. Goodman can provide right-handed power and position versatility. Aaron Schunk can play shortstop, second and third base and has mostly gap power. Corner outfielder Sean Bouchard performed much better in 2022 (.954 OPS) and 2023 (1.056 OPS) in limited action than last year (.586 OPS) when he had three stints with the Rockies.

MANAGEMENT

Bud Black, entering his ninth season as Rockies manager, hasn’t had a winning season since he guided the Rockies to the playoffs in 2017 and 2018. Soon after the 2024 season, he signed a one-year extension. That’s not much security. The players like and respect Black, but if the team gets off to a poor start, Black’s job could be in jeopardy. General manager Bill Schmidt non-tendered Rodgers and starting pitcher Cal Quantril, moves that saved the Rockies an estimated \$14 million. Finances mattered, but these moves were made because the Rockies believe younger and better players can replace them.

FINAL ANALYSIS

After two abysmal seasons, the Rockies are on the rise. Their rotation should be improved. With added experience, the young hitters could be more selective and make more consistent contact, but they’ll still be sanding down rough edges this season. The Rockies won’t be embarrassed and could make considerable progress this year — but not enough to be playing meaningful games in September.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

SUMMER SURGE After Kyle Freeland returned on June 23 following two months on the injured list with a left elbow strain, the Rockies went 11-6 in his 17 starts. In those outings, which totaled 97.2 innings, Freeland struck out 76 and walked 18 and allowed more than three runs in just four of those 17 starts. Freeland has an active 33-start streak of allowing three walks or fewer.

ROCK-SOLID ROOKIES Victor Vodnik’s 73.2 relief innings were the fourth-most in the National League and the most by a Rockies rookie reliever since Adam Ottavino’s 79 innings in 2012. Vodnik threw 53 pitches of 100 mph or faster and averaged 97.9 mph with his fastball. He threw the fastest pitch of his career — 101.2 mph — against the Dodgers on Sept. 29. Speaking of Rockies rookies, six rookie relievers combined for a 3.84 ERA, 12 saves and 8.59 strikeouts per nine innings in 143 appearances in the final weeks of the 2024 season — Vodnik, Jeff Criswell, Seth Halvorsen, Jaden Hill, Luis Peralta and Angel Chivilli.

FIREBALLER Halvorsen, who made his major-league debut Aug. 30, threw 47 pitches 100 mph or faster. He threw a 102.6 mph fastball on Sept. 26, the second-fastest pitch by a Rockies hurler in the Statcast Era that began in 2015, trailing Julian Fernandez’s 102.8 mph fastball in 2021.

MORE NEEDED Kris Bryant has played just 159 games in his three years with the Rockies, hitting .250 with a .713 OPS and 17 home runs and 60 RBIs. The 33-year-old Bryant has four years and \$108 million remaining on the seven-year, \$182 million contract he signed as a free agent before the 2022 season.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27 TB	28	29 TB
30 TB	31 PHI	1	2 PHI	3 PHI	4 A's	5 A's
6 A's	7	8 MIL	9 MIL	10 MIL	11 SD	12 SD
13 SD	14 LAD	15 LAD	16 LAD	17	18 WAS	19 WAS
20 WAS	21	22 KC	23 KC	24 KC	25 CIN	26 CIN
27 CIN	28 ATL	29 ATL	30 ATL			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1 SF	2 SF	3 SF
4 SF	5	6 DET	7 DET	8 DET	9 SD	10 SD
11 SD	12 TEX	13 TEX	14 TEX	15	16 ARI	17 ARI
18 ARI	19 PHI	20 PHI	21 PHI	22 PHI	23 NYY	24 NYY
25 NYY	26 CHC	27 CHC	28 CHC	29	30 NYM	31 NYM
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 NYM	2 MIA	3 MIA	4 MIA	5	6 NYM	7 NYM
8 NYM	9	10 SF	11 SF	12 SF	13 ATL	14 ATL
15 ATL	16 WAS	17 WAS	18 WAS	19 WAS	20 ARI	21 ARI
22 ARI	23	24 LAD	25 LAD	26 LAD	27 MIL	28 MIL
29 MIL	30					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 HOU	2 HOU	3 HOU	4 CWS	5 CWS
6 CWS	7 BOS	8 BOS	9 BOS	10	11 CIN	12 CIN
13 CIN	14	15 ALL-STAR BREAK	16	17	18 MIN	19 MIN
20 MIN	21 STL	22 STL	23 STL	24	25 BAL	26 BAL
27 BAL	28 CLE	29 CLE	30 CLE	31		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 PIT	2 PIT
3 PIT	4 TOR	5 TOR	6 TOR	7	8 ARI	9 ARI
10 ARI	11 STL	12 STL	13 STL	14 ARI	15 ARI	16 ARI
17 ARI	18 LAD	19 LAD	20 LAD	21 LAD	22 PIT	23 PIT
24 PIT	25	26 HOU	27 HOU	28 HOU	29 CHC	30 CHC
31 CHC						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1 SF	2 SF	3 SF	4	5 SD	6 SD
7 SD	8 LAD	9 LAD	10 LAD	11 SD	12 SD	13 SD
14 SD	15	16 MIA	17 MIA	18 MIA	19 LAA	20 LAA
21 LAA	22	23 SEA	24 SEA	25 SEA	26 SF	27 SF
28 SF	29	30				

STATISTICIAN

0 NL West titles for the Rockies in their 32-year existence. They and the Marlins are the only teams never to have won a division title.

12 Rockies players who made their major-league debut in 2024, tying the franchise record set in 2014 and 2016.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Chase Dollander, RHP (23)** Former SEC Pitcher of the Year has front-of-rotation stuff.

■ **2. Charlie Condon, OF/3B (21)** He has plus-plus power and should prosper hitting in Coors.

■ **3. Yanquiel Fernandez, OF (22)** An aggressive hitter with tremendous power, quick hands and a plus arm.

■ **4. Cole Carrigg, OF/SS/C (22)** A switch-hitter who punishes fastballs but struggles against breaking and offspeed pitches.

■ **5. Robert Calaz, OF (19)** Calaz has immense power to all fields but chases breaking pitches.

■ **6. Zac Veen, OF (23)** Speed, plate discipline, ability to handle velocity are assets.

■ **7. Adael Amador, 2B (21)** Excellent bat-to-ball skills but is a fringe-average defender.

■ **8. Carson Palmquist, LHP (23)** Lacks power but has the ability to hit his spots with funky delivery.

■ **9. Brody Brecht, RHP (22)** Command has been a concern, but Brecht could rise quickly.

■ **10. Ryan Ritter, SS (24)** He should begin the year at Triple-A and could be Colorado's future second baseman.

Rockies Roster

Senior Vice President & General Manager: Bill Schmidt • Manager: Bud Black • Coaches: Dustin Garneau (bullpen), Ronnie Gideon (first base), Andy González (asst. hitting), Hensley Meulens (hitting), Mike Redmond (bench), Warren Schaeffer (third base/infield), Darryl Scott (pitching)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
59	Jake Bird	R-R	6-3	200	12/4/95	COLORADO	2-2	4.50	35	0	1	40.0	43	25	31	
						Albuquerque (AAA)	1-0	5.27	14	0	0	13.2	20	7	19	
64	Bradley Blalock	R-R	6-2	213	12/25/00	COLORADO	1-3	6.07	6	6	0	29.2	35	19	20	
						Albuquerque (AAA)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	3.0	1	0	4	
						Hartford (AA)	0-1	6.17	2	2	0	11.2	16	2	12	
						MILWAUKEE	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	1	0	
						Biloxi (AA)	5-2	4.08	16	16	0	75.0	69	27	64	
57	Angel Chivilli	R-R	6-2	162	7/28/02	COLORADO	2-3	4.55	30	0	1	31.2	31	10	28	
						Albuquerque (AAA)	0-0	0.00	3	0	0	3.1	0	0	5	
						Hartford (AA)	1-0	2.49	22	0	1	25.1	21	12	37	
46	Jeff Criswell	R-R	6-4	225	3/10/99	COLORADO	1-0	2.75	13	0	0	19.2	20	9	27	
						Albuquerque (AAA)	1-1	6.24	35	0	0	57.2	75	28	83	
18	Ryan Feltner	R-R	6-4	190	9/2/96	COLORADO	3-10	4.49	30	30	0	162.1	165	52	138	
						Albuquerque (AAA)	0-1	10.13	1	1	0	2.2	4	2	3	
21	Kyle Freeland	L-L	6-4	204	5/14/93	COLORADO	5-8	5.24	21	21	0	113.1	134	26	85	
						Albuquerque (AAA)	0-0	3.38	2	2	0	8.0	5	5	8	
58	Lucas Gilbreath	L-L	6-1	185	3/5/96	COLORADO	0-0	54.00	3	0	0	1.0	7	1	0	
						Albuquerque (AAA)	0-0	7.11	7	0	0	6.1	6	5	6	
						Spokane (A+)	0-0	10.80	2	1	0	1.2	1	2	4	
26	Austin Gomber	L-L	6-5	220	11/23/93	COLORADO	5-12	4.75	30	30	0	165.0	178	38	116	
29	Tanner Gordon	L-R	6-5	215	10/26/97	COLORADO	0-6	8.65	8	8	0	34.1	53	6	26	
						Albuquerque (AAA)	4-4	4.45	11	11	0	54.2	62	13	44	
54	Seth Halvorsen	R-R	6-2	225	2/18/00	COLORADO	2-1	1.46	12	0	2	12.1	8	2	13	
						Albuquerque (AAA)	1-0	3.00	8	0	1	9.0	8	4	15	
						Hartford (AA)	4-2	4.84	33	0	8	35.1	34	19	41	
	Jimmy Herget	R-R	6-3	170	9/9/93	ATLANTA	0-1	4.38	8	0	0	12.1	13	3	15	
						Gwinnett (AAA)	0-1	3.06	15	0	3	17.2	20	6	21	
						Salt Lake (AAA)	1-2	3.97	10	0	0	11.1	10	1	7	
						Iowa (AAA)	0-0	0.00	4	0	0	4.1	3	0	5	
0	Jaden Hill	R-R	6-4	234	12/22/99	COLORADO	0-0	5.06	9	0	0	10.2	8	4	6	
						Albuquerque (AAA)	1-0	10.29	7	0	1	7.0	9	6	13	
						Hartford (AA)	5-2	3.52	34	0	6	38.1	39	11	56	
56	Evan Justice	L-L	6-4	205	7/7/98	COLORADO	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	0.1	0	1	1	
						Albuquerque (AAA)	0-3	8.76	32	0	0	24.2	27	34	26	
40	Tyler Kinley	R-R	6-4	220	1/31/91	COLORADO	6-1	6.19	67	0	12	64.0	61	33	72	
61	Justin Lawrence	R-R	6-3	213	11/25/94	COLORADO	4-4	6.49	56	0	2	59.2	73	33	45	
48	Germán Márquez	R-R	6-1	230	2/22/95	COLORADO	0-0	6.75	1	1	0	4.0	5	4	3	
						Hartford (AA)	0-2	4.15	2	2	0	8.2	9	1	10	
55	Juan Mejia	R-R	6-3	200	7/4/00	Hartford (AA)	4-4	5.00	47	0	6	54.0	57	30	65	
43	Anthony Molina	R-R	6-1	170	1/12/02	COLORADO	1-1	6.79	35	1	0	59.2	72	22	41	
41	Luis Peralta	L-L	5-11	170	1/6/01	COLORADO	0-0	0.73	15	0	0	12.1	7	5	14	
						Albuquerque (AAA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	1	1	
						Hartford (AA)	3-0	1.29	5	0	0	7.0	4	2	10	
						Altoona (AA)	0-0	1.86	7	0	2	9.2	9	3	14	
						Greensboro (A+)	4-0	0.60	19	0	3	30.0	12	15	50	
49	Antonio Senzatela	R-R	6-1	236	1/21/95	COLORADO	0-1	6.57	3	3	0	12.1	15	8	7	
						Hartford (AA)	0-1	6.17	3	3	0	11.2	12	2	13	
						Spokane (A+)	0-0	3.38	2	2	0	5.1	4	2	5	
38	Victor Vodnik	R-R	6-0	200	10/9/99	COLORADO	5-4	4.28	64	0	9	73.2	72	37	65	
						Hartford (AA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	0	2	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
15	Hunter Goodman	R-R	5-11	210	10/8/99	COLORADO	.190	70	211	24	40	13	36	8	64	1
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.281	31	121	21	34	8	26	15	32	1
3	Drew Romo	S-R	6-1	205	8/29/01	COLORADO	.176	16	51	4	9	0	6	2	18	0
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.297	85	343	51	102	14	60	16	66	3
25	Jacob Stallings	R-R	6-5	225	12/22/89	COLORADO	.263	82	243	31	64	9	36	27	65	0
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
1	Adael Amador	S-R	6-0	200	4/11/03	COLORADO	.171	10	35	1	6	0	0	1	6	1
						Hartford (AA)	.230	100	383	61	88	14	52	62	88	35
71	Thairo Estrada	R-R	5-10	185	2/22/96	SAN FRANCISCO	.217	96	364	43	79	9	47	10	76	2
52	Kyle Farmer	R-R	6-0	205	8/17/90	MINNESOTA	.214	107	215	26	46	5	25	19	49	3
						St. Paul (AAA)	.273	3	11	0	3	0	1	1	4	0
24	Ryan McMahon	L-R	6-2	219	12/14/94	COLORADO	.242	153	567	68	137	20	65	69	185	4
30	Aaron Schunk	R-R	6-1	205	7/24/97	COLORADO	.234	39	94	14	22	2	7	4	31	0
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.291	69	275	36	80	7	43	19	53	11
4	Michael Toggia	S-L	6-5	226	8/16/98	COLORADO	.218	116	399	62	87	25	55	54	147	10
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.277	30	119	20	33	9	27	15	35	1
14	Ezequiel Tovar	R-R	6-0	162	8/1/01	COLORADO	.269	157	655	83	176	26	78	23	200	6
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
27	Jordan Beck	R-R	6-2	225	4/19/01	COLORADO	.188	55	170	14	32	3	13	12	65	7
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.319	39	163	36	52	8	35	23	44	6
						ACL Rockies (R)	.273	3	11	2	3	0	0	0	1	0
12	Sean Bouchard	R-R	6-3	215	5/16/96	COLORADO	.187	31	91	14	17	1	8	12	33	4
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.324	46	179	38	58	11	41	25	47	5
23	Kris Bryant	R-R	6-5	230	1/4/92	COLORADO	.218	37	133	9	29	2	15	13	48	0
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.290	8	31	6	9	2	3	2	8	0
9	Brenton Doyle	R-R	6-4	220	5/14/98	COLORADO	.260	149	542	82	141	23	72	46	153	30
82	Yanquiel Fernandez	L-L	6-2	198	1/1/03	Albuquerque (AAA)	.211	33	128	10	27	2	18	9	28	0
						Hartford (AA)	.283	89	314	40	89	10	46	26	66	1
16	Sam Hilliard	L-L	6-4	236	2/21/94	COLORADO	.239	58	138	26	33	10	27	14	56	5
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.288	65	264	57	76	14	44	38	77	13
2	Greg Jones	S-R	6-0	175	3/7/98	COLORADO	.200	6	5	1	1	1	1	1	4	0
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.269	86	361	78	97	16	42	37	143	46
						ACL Rockies (R)	.200	3	10	2	2	0	1	1	5	0
22	Nolan Jones	L-R	6-4	195	5/7/98	COLORADO	.227	79	256	28	58	3	28	36	91	5
						Albuquerque (AAA)	.268	20	71	15	19	3	15	10	27	0
						Fresno (A)	.313	5	16	6	5	2	5	5	4	0
	Zac Veen	L-R	6-3	190	12/12/01	Albuquerque (AAA)	.220	21	82	12	18	6	15	7	24	6
						Hartford (AA)	.268	36	127	24	34	5	14	16	38	10
						Spokane (A+)	.235	5	17	4	4	0	3	6	3	3
						ACL Rockies (R)	.571	3	7	3	4	0	3	1	2	2

Los Angeles **DODGERS**

2025 PREDICTION

1ST

NL WEST

2024 FINISH: 1ST (98-64)

One is no longer the loneliest number in Los Angeles. For 11 seasons (2013 through 2023), the Dodgers were the winningest team in baseball, capturing 10 division titles and three National League pennants. But they had only one World Series title to show for it — and that came in the truncated pandemic season of 2020, a fact that was pointed out to them often enough to cause chafing.

That changed in 2024. Fueled by the signing of Shohei Ohtani (who won his third MVP award in his first season with the franchise), the Dodgers won a second World Series in this run, their first full-season championship since 1988.

They aren't satisfied. Ohtani joked in the euphoria of a post-World Series celebratory locker room that he wanted to do this nine more times — each year of his 10-year deal. They have the resources and the talent on hand to keep the championship window open for a long time.



Shohei Ohtani

ROTATION

Seventeen different pitchers started games for the Dodgers in 2024 (including relievers pressed into service). Eleven of them spent time on the injured list. Surgeries sidelined promising young pitchers Gavin Stone, River Ryan, Emmet Sheehan and Kyle Hurt. The epidemic left the Dodgers with just three healthy starting pitchers when the postseason arrived. This year, they have the numbers with two-time Cy Young Award winner Blake Snell added to the mix. They will need them — with Ohtani returning to two-way status and Yohinobu Yamamoto handled with care, the Dodgers plan to go with a six-man rotation in 2025. Beyond that trio, the Dodgers have a formidable group to choose from. But they all have issues. Tyler Glasnow pitched a career-high 134 innings in 2024 but only 31 after June due to an elbow injury. Tony Gonsolin and Dustin May missed 2024 while recovering from surgeries. Clayton Kershaw had foot and knee surgeries in November, and the 36-year-old won't be available for a full season. Bobby Miller won 11 games as a rookie in 2023 but regressed badly in 2024; he posted an 8.52 ERA in 13 big-league starts and was demoted to the minors in mid-season.

BULLPEN

After their victory over the Yankees, president of baseball operations Andrew Friedman pointed out how history shows that there are a lot of different ways to win a World Series title. The Dodgers' way in 2024 leaned heavily on a deep bullpen. They were pressed into service for "bullpen games" in each round of the postseason — most notably combining for an eight-pitcher shutout in Game 4 of their Division Series against the Padres when the Dodgers were on the brink of elimination. Most of that group is back in 2025, including Evan Phillips, Blake Treinen, Michael Kopech and Alex Vesia. Brusdar Graterol will miss most of the season following shoulder surgery. Veterans Joe Kelly (free agent) and Daniel Hudson (retired) have departed. But the Dodgers have taken a flier on Giovanny Gallegos, who fell on hard times with the Cardinals.

Dodger Stadium

Opened: 1962 • Capacity: 56,000
 Left: 330' Center: 395' Right: 330'
 Tickets: 866-DODGERS
mlb.com/DODGERS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Highest single-season launch angle sweet-spot percentage, 2023-24

1. 2023 Freddie Freeman, Dodgers 46.6
2. 2023 Luis Arraez, Marlins 44.7
3. 2023 Brandon Belt, Blue Jays 44.0
4. 2024 Freddie Freeman, Dodgers 43.1
4. 2023 Donovan Solano, Twins 43.1

JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA-IMAGN IMAGES

MIDDLE INFIELD

When the Dodgers pivoted away from Gavin Lux in spring 2024, Mookie Betts stepped up, taking on the challenge of becoming an everyday shortstop. It was a rare move by a star player, making himself vulnerable in that way. The Dodgers pivoted again after Betts returned from a mid-season hand injury but now plan to give it another go entering 2025 — with both Miguel Rojas and Tommy Edman as fallback options. Lux, meanwhile, became the odd man out in a crowded infield this winter and was traded to the Cincinnati Reds after the Dodgers signed Korean star Hyeseong Kim. Kim is a left-handed hitter with good bat-to-ball skills and limited power but with more speed than Lux. He stole 211 bases over his seven full seasons in Korea.

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

DH	Shohei Ohtani (L)
SS	Mookie Betts (R)
1B	Freddie Freeman (L)
LF	Teoscar Hernández (R)
3B	Max Muncy (L)
C	Will Smith (R)
CF	Tommy Edman (S)
RF	Michael Conforto (L)
2B	Hyeseong Kim (L)

■ BENCH

UTIL	Chris Taylor (R)
C	Austin Barnes (R)
IF	Miguel Rojas (R)
OF	Andy Pages (R)

■ ROTATION

LHP	Blake Snell
RHP	Tyler Glasnow
RHP	Yoshinobu Yamamoto
RHP	Shohei Ohtani
RHP	Tony Gonsolin
RHP	Dustin May

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Evan Phillips (C)
RHP	Michael Kopech
RHP	Blake Treinen
LHP	Alex Vesia
LHP	Anthony Banda
RHP	Ryan Brasier
RHP	Giovanny Gallegos

CORNERS

The 2024 season was a challenging one for first baseman Freddie Freeman. An ironman by modern standards, he missed time due to (and played with) multiple injuries as well as his young son's illness. But all that will be remembered is his walk-off grand slam in Game 1 of the World Series — a historic moment on par with Kirk Gibson's iconic home run in 1988. Max Muncy missed months with his own injury, a misdiagnosed displaced rib. The assortment of replacements at third base were dreadful, and Muncy highlighted his under-the-hood

value to the lineup during the postseason when he hit just .163 but had a .388 on-base percentage thanks to 15 walks. During a winter that saw Alex Bregman and Nolan Arenado change teams, the Dodgers stood pat with Muncy.

OUTFIELD

Betts' move to the infield and Teoscar Hernández's free agency left the Dodgers with an outfield potentially in need of a rebuild. But Hernández re-signed with LA for three years and \$66 million. They filled another corner spot with the signing of veteran free agent Michael Conforto to a one-year, \$17 million contract. Versatile Tommy Edman could be the primary center fielder (if he isn't needed on the infield). Conforto hit lefties much better than righties in 2024, but his career numbers suggest that right-handed Andy Pages or utilityman Chris Taylor could wind up a platoon partner.



Mookie Betts

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE DODGERS "They never take for granted what they have. Win the World Series? OK, now let's sign Blake Snell. There was nobody better down the stretch last year; the only reason he doesn't pitch longer in games is because he gets so many foul balls — nobody can square him up. With Snell, Yoshinobu Yamamoto, Tyler Glasnow and everyone else, it's the perfect situation for Shohei Ohtani to just give whatever he can give on the mound. He doesn't have to be full-go for 30 starts. It seems like 20 is more realistic — but then again, hasn't he exceeded everything we've thought about him? Bringing back Blake Treinen for the bullpen was smart, and they solved the enigma of Michael Kopech, which you knew they would do. They're the best in baseball at figuring out what guys need to do to succeed. I'm curious to see what they do with Tommy Edman; he's so important to them as a switch-hitter who plays everywhere. Will Mookie Betts stick at shortstop? Probably — he's so good at everything. You almost wonder if he's doing it just for the challenge. Freddie Freeman was so huge for them in October on a bad ankle, and now it's repaired. Like Mookie and Shohei and Clayton Kershaw, he's a lock for Cooperstown."

CATCHING

The Dodgers invested in Will Smith, giving him a 10-year, \$140 million contract extension in March despite the presence of catching prospects Dalton Rushing and Diego Cartaya (since traded) in their farm system. The 29-year-old Smith went on to make the NL All-Star team for the second time, but his offense dropped off markedly in 2024. His .248 average and .760 OPS were career-lows (and the OPS represents a four-year slide).

DH/BENCH

Ohtani’s first season with the Dodgers was one for the ages. He won his third MVP award after becoming the first 50-50 man (54 home runs, 59 steals) in baseball history. Ohtani will return to two-way status in 2025, and it will be interesting to see how that affects his offense. Veterans Taylor, Rojas and backup catcher Austin Barnes are familiar names on the Dodgers’ bench.

MANAGEMENT

Down two games to one in the best-of-five NLDS against the Padres, the Dodgers were facing a third consecutive first-round failure and the likelihood of manager Dave Roberts being tagged as the fall guy. But the Dodgers rallied to oust the Padres and went on to win the World Series. Roberts’ deft handling of the Dodgers’ limited pitching staff on the way to a second World Series title instead has many predicting a Hall of Fame induction in his future.

FINAL ANALYSIS

“What we are shooting for, in our minds, is to make this a golden era of Dodger baseball,” Friedman said multiple times this winter. With 12 consecutive post-season appearances, 11 division titles, more wins than any team in baseball, four World Series appearances and now two World Series titles, it might already qualify. Backed by rich (and willing) ownership, Friedman’s sophisticated front office and a massive influx of revenue from Ohtani’s arrival, the Dodgers are well-positioned to add to those accomplishments.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

HIGH COST The Dodgers paid the price for their success in 2024. Even with deferrals in several contracts (most notably Shohei Ohtani’s), the Dodgers had the highest payroll for Competitive Balance Tax purposes at \$353 million and paid an additional \$103 million in tax penalties (also the most in MLB). The Dodgers have exceeded the CBT threshold in nine of the past 12 seasons including each of the past four, paying a total of \$312.5 million in luxury tax penalties over that time.

WORK ZONE Dodger Stadium was a construction zone during the offseason. The Dodgers invested approximately \$100 million into renovations at the stadium, which will turn 63 years old in 2025. The renovations involved “Level One” of the structure, which includes the home and visitors clubhouses as well as batting cages and other training facilities. Dodger Stadium is the third-oldest MLB stadium behind Fenway Park and Wrigley Field.

ROAD TRIP For the second consecutive season, the Dodgers will open their regular season in Asia. The Dodgers split two games with the San Diego Padres in Seoul, South Korea, last year and will travel to Tokyo for two games against the Chicago Cubs on March 18 and 19 this year. The Dodgers and Cubs will also play exhibition games against the Hanshin Tigers and Yomiuri Giants at the Tokyo Dome. With Japanese stars on the Dodgers (Ohtani and Yoshinobu Yamamoto) and Cubs (Seiya Suzuki and Shota Imanaga), the games are expected to pack the 55,000-seat stadium. This will be the sixth time in the past 25 years that MLB has started a season with games in Japan. It will also be the third time in 12 years that the Dodgers have opened a season overseas — Australia in 2014, Korea in 2024 and Japan in 2025.

Schedule

HOME

AWAY

TOKYO SERIES

MARCH & APRIL

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		18 CHC	19 CHC	27 DET	28 DET	29 DET
30	31 ATL	1 ATL	2 ATL	3	4 PHI	5 PHI
6 PHI	7 WAS	8 WAS	9 WAS	10	11 CHC	12 CHC
13 CHC	14 COL	15 COL	16 COL	17	18 TEX	19 TEX
20 TEX	21	22 CHC	23 CHC	24	25 PIT	26 PIT
27 PIT	28 MIA	29 MIA	30 MIA			

MAY

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2 ATL	3 ATL
4 ATL	5 MIA	6 MIA	7 MIA	8 ARZ	9 ARI	10 ARI
11 ARI	12	13 A's	14 A's	15 A's	16 LAA	17 LAA
18 LAA	19 ARI	20 ARI	21 ARI	22	23 NYM	24 NYM
25 NYM	26 CLE	27 CLE	28 CLE	29	30 NYY	31 NYY

JUNE

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 NYY	2 NYM	3 NYM	4 NYM	5 NYM	6 STL	7 STL
8 STL	9 SD	10 SD	11 SD	12	13 SF	14 SF
15 SF	16 SD	17 SD	18 SD	19 SD	20 WAS	21 WAS
22 WAS	23	24 COL	25 COL	26 COL	27 KC	28 KC
29 KC	30					

JULY

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 CWS	2 CWS	3 CWS	4 HOU	5 HOU
6 HOU	7 MIL	8 MIL	9 MIL	10	11 SF	12 SF
13 SF	14	15	16	17	18 MIL	19 MIL
20 MIL	21 MIN	22 MIN	23 MIN	24	25 BOS	26 BOS
27 BOS	28 CIN	29 CIN	30 CIN	31		

AUGUST

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 TB	2 TB
3 TB	4 STL	5 STL	6 STL	7	8 TOR	9 TOR
10 TOR	11 LAA	12 LAA	13 LAA	14	15 SD	16 SD
17 SD	18 COL	19 COL	20 COL	21 COL	22 SD	23 SD
24 SD	25 CIN	26 CIN	27 CIN	28	29 ARI	30 ARI
31 ARI						

SEPTEMBER

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2 PIT	3 PIT	4 PIT	5 BAL	6 BAL
7 BAL	8 COL	9 COL	10 COL	11	12 SF	13 SF
14 SF	15 PHI	16 PHI	17 PHI	18 SF	19 SF	20 SF
21 SF	22	23 ARI	24 ARI	25 ARI	26 SEA	27 SEA
28 SEA	29	30				

STATISTICIAN

.627 Manager Dave Roberts' regular-season winning percentage over nine seasons with the Dodgers, the best among managers since 1950.

33 Consecutive scoreless innings over the NL Division Series and NL Championship Series by Dodgers pitchers in 2024, tying the postseason record (Baltimore Orioles, 1966).

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Dalton Rushing, C/OF (24)** Well-regarded prospect got a taste of left field in Triple-A.

■ **2. Josue De Paula, OF (19)** De Paula has the most offensive upside of any Dodgers prospect.

■ **3. Jackson Ferris, LHP (21)** Touched Double-A last season, posting a 2.54 ERA in seven starts.

■ **4. Alex Freeland, SS (23)** Ability to control the strike zone as a hitter is his biggest asset.

■ **5. Zyhir Hope, OF (20)** Slashed .290/.419/.484 in 61 minor-league games in 2024.

■ **6. Eduardo Quintero, OF (19)** Hit .330 in the Arizona Complex League in '24.

■ **7. Kellon Lindsey, SS (19)** Elite speed has prompted comparisons to Trea Turner.

■ **8. Joendry Vargas, SS (19)** Hit .303 in the Arizona Complex League last year.

■ **9. River Ryan, RHP (26)** Underwent Tommy John in August and will likely miss the season.

■ **10. Nick Frasso, RHP (26)** Labrum surgery in November 2023 sidelined him for the '24 season.

Dodgers Roster

President of Baseball Operations: Andrew Friedman • Manager: Dave Roberts • Coaches: Josh Bard (bullpen), Aaron Bates (hitting), Dino Ebel (third base), Bob Geren (field coordinator), Danny Lehmann (bench), Connor McGuinness (asst. pitching), Mark Prior (pitching), Robert Van Scoyoc (hitting), Chris Woodward (first base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
43	Anthony Banda	L-L	6-2	221	8/10/93	LOS ANGELES NL	3-2	3.08	48	2	2	49.2	44	18	50	
						Columbus (AAA)	0-0	2.12	12	0	1	17.0	10	6	25	
57	Ryan Brasier	R-R	6-0	223	8/26/87	LOS ANGELES NL	1-0	3.54	29	4	0	28.0	22	5	25	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	2-0	0.00	8	0	0	8.0	4	1	12	
78	Ben Casparius	R-R	6-2	215	2/11/99	LOS ANGELES NL	2-0	2.16	3	0	0	8.1	9	4	12	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	4-3	3.36	16	14	0	67.0	47	35	72	
						Tulsa (AA)	2-1	3.32	5	5	0	21.2	18	11	34	
	Jack Dreyer	R-L	6-2	205	2/27/99	Oklahoma City (AAA)	5-2	2.95	37	0	4	42.2	39	9	52	
						Tulsa (AA)	0-0	0.00	9	0	0	14.2	6	3	20	
79	Nick Frasso	R-R	6-5	200	10/18/98	INJURED — Missed Season										
	Giovanny Gallegos	R-R	6-2	205	8/14/91	ST. LOUIS	2-1	6.53	21	0	1	20.2	24	10	21	
31	Tyler Glasnow	L-R	6-8	225	8/23/93	LOS ANGELES NL	9-6	3.49	22	22	0	134.0	92	35	168	
26	Tony Gonsolin	R-R	6-3	205	5/14/94	Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-0	2.35	3	3	0	7.2	7	2	12	
48	Brusdar Graterol	R-R	6-1	265	8/26/98	LOS ANGELES NL	0-0	2.45	7	0	0	7.1	3	2	7	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-0	5.87	8	0	0	7.2	13	2	7	
						ACL Dodgers (R)	1-0	4.50	2	0	0	2.0	3	0	1	
29	Michael Grove	R-R	6-3	200	12/18/96	LOS ANGELES NL	4-4	5.12	39	2	0	51.0	46	16	54	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	2-0	1.59	10	0	0	11.1	5	3	11	
60	Edgardo Henriquez	R-R	6-4	200	6/24/02	LOS ANGELES NL	0-0	2.70	3	0	1	3.1	2	2	5	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	1-0	2.84	14	0	0	12.2	14	10	18	
						Tulsa (AA)	0-1	3.06	16	0	0	17.2	11	8	24	
						Great Lakes (A+)	0-1	2.92	8	0	0	12.1	7	5	25	
						R. Cucamonga (A)	0-0	1.74	5	5	0	10.1	4	6	21	
63	Kyle Hurt	R-R	6-3	240	5/30/98	LOS ANGELES NL	0-1	1.35	3	1	0	6.2	8	1	3	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-0	3.07	13	2	1	14.2	9	12	22	
96	Landon Knack	L-R	6-2	220	7/15/97	LOS ANGELES NL	3-5	3.65	15	12	1	69.0	58	18	69	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	4-3	3.71	14	12	0	68.0	55	31	79	
45	Michael Kopech	R-R	6-3	220	4/30/96	LOS ANGELES NL	4-0	1.13	24	0	6	24.0	9	10	29	
						CHICAGO AL	2-8	4.74	43	0	9	43.2	35	24	59	
85	Dustin May	R-R	6-6	180	9/6/97	INJURED — Missed Season										
28	Bobby Miller	L-R	6-5	220	4/5/99	LOS ANGELES NL	2-4	8.52	13	13	0	56.0	69	30	52	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-1	5.06	6	6	0	26.2	24	17	23	
						R. Cucamonga (A)	0-1	9.95	2	2	0	6.1	9	3	4	
59	Evan Phillips	R-R	6-2	215	9/11/94	LOS ANGELES NL	5-1	3.62	61	0	18	54.2	48	17	63	
						R. Cucamonga (A)	0-0	0.00	2	0	0	1.2	0	0	3	
77	River Ryan	R-R	6-2	195	8/17/98	LOS ANGELES NL	1-0	1.33	4	4	0	20.1	15	9	18	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-0	2.76	5	5	0	16.1	13	6	19	
						R. Cucamonga (A)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	2.0	0	0	3	
						ACL Dodgers (R)	0-0	1.50	2	2	0	6.0	4	2	10	
80	Emmet Sheehan	R-R	6-5	220	11/15/99	INJURED — Missed Season										
7	Blake Snell	L-L	6-4	225	12/4/92	SAN FRANCISCO	5-3	3.12	20	20	0	104.0	65	44	145	
						Sacramento (AAA)	1-0	3.07	4	4	0	14.2	7	6	25	
						San Jose (A)	0-0	0.00	1	1	0	4.0	0	0	7	
35	Gavin Stone	R-R	6-1	175	10/15/98	LOS ANGELES NL	11-5	3.53	25	25	0	140.1	133	37	116	
49	Blake Treinen	R-R	6-5	225	6/30/88	LOS ANGELES NL	7-3	1.93	50	0	1	46.2	33	11	56	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-0	10.38	5	1	0	4.1	8	0	6	
						Tulsa (AA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	0	3	
51	Alex Vesia	L-L	6-1	209	4/11/96	LOS ANGELES NL	5-4	1.76	67	0	5	66.1	33	33	87	
70	Justin Wroblewski	L-L	6-1	194	7/14/00	LOS ANGELES NL	1-2	5.70	8	6	1	36.1	34	16	26	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	1-2	5.46	7	5	0	28.0	34	18	42	
						Tulsa (AA)	5-2	3.06	13	13	0	67.2	57	13	62	
18	Yoshinobu Yamamoto	R-R	5-10	176	8/17/98	LOS ANGELES NL	7-2	3.00	18	18	0	90.0	78	22	105	
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	0-1	6.75	2	2	0	4.0	3	2	5	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
15	Austin Barnes	R-R	5-10	187	12/28/89	LOS ANGELES NL	.264	54	140	12	37	1	11	14	36	3
67	Hunter Feduccia	L-R	6-1	215	6/5/97	LOS ANGELES NL	.333	5	12	2	4	0	1	2	2	0
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.284	82	285	41	81	6	50	59	72	2
16	Will Smith	R-R	5-10	195	3/28/95	LOS ANGELES NL	.248	128	476	77	118	20	75	51	105	1
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
50	Mookie Betts	R-R	5-9	180	10/7/92	LOS ANGELES NL	.289	116	450	75	130	19	75	61	57	16
5	Freddie Freeman	L-R	6-5	220	9/12/89	LOS ANGELES NL	.282	147	542	81	153	22	89	78	100	9
	Hyeseong Kim	L-R	5-10	176	1/27/99	Kiwoom (KBO)	.326	126	509	90	166	11	75	47	62	30
13	Max Muncy	L-R	6-0	215	8/25/90	LOS ANGELES NL	.232	73	237	47	55	15	48	45	77	1
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.286	6	21	3	6	1	4	3	6	0
11	Miguel Rojas	R-R	6-0	188	2/24/89	LOS ANGELES NL	.283	103	307	41	87	6	36	23	34	8
						R. Cucamonga (A)	.000	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
30	Michael Conforto	L-R	6-1	215	3/1/93	SAN FRANCISCO	.237	130	438	56	104	20	66	42	118	0
						Sacramento (AAA)	.200	2	5	0	1	0	0	1	1	0
25	Tommy Edman	S-R	5-10	193	5/9/95	LOS ANGELES NL	.237	37	139	20	33	6	20	11	30	6
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.294	6	17	5	5	1	4	6	2	1
						Springfield (AA)	.207	8	29	3	6	0	4	4	9	0
37	Teoscar Hernández	R-R	6-2	215	10/15/92	LOS ANGELES NL	.272	154	589	84	160	33	99	53	188	12
17	Shohei Ohtani	L-R	6-4	210	7/5/94	LOS ANGELES NL	.310	159	636	134	197	54	130	81	162	59
33	James Outman	L-R	6-2	215	5/14/97	LOS ANGELES NL	.147	53	136	12	20	4	11	16	55	2
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.279	69	265	62	74	17	46	44	81	11
44	Andy Pages	R-R	6-0	212	12/8/00	LOS ANGELES NL	.248	116	403	65	100	13	46	29	108	1
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.356	24	101	25	36	8	22	10	21	3
3	Chris Taylor	R-R	6-1	196	8/29/90	LOS ANGELES NL	.202	87	213	28	43	4	23	28	76	5
						Oklahoma City (AAA)	.364	3	11	2	4	0	1	2	3	0
						R. Cucamonga (A)	.286	2	7	0	2	0	3	1	2	0

San Diego **PADRES**

2025 PREDICTION

2ND

NL WEST

2024 FINISH: 2ND (93-69)

The promise of a new season is going to come with considerable pain for the San Diego Padres and their long-suffering fans. They'll be reminded of their epic collapse in the NL Division Series against the archrival Los Angeles Dodgers, when an unfathomable 24-inning scoreless streak ended their season. The Dodgers went on to win the World Series and continue to flex their considerable financial muscle, while the Padres appear to remain budget conscious. Nonetheless, Fernando Tatis Jr., Manny Machado and Jackson Merrill make the Padres a fun team to watch, and Petco Park is packed and loud every night.

ROTATION

The Padres planned to make a strong run at Japanese fireballer Roki Sasaki, who would go a long way in helping them compete with the Dodgers. The Padres have a glaring hole in the rotation to fill after hometown hero Joe Musgrove underwent Tommy John surgery in October and will miss the 2025 season. Sasaki is said to have a strong relationship with Padres veteran righthander Yu Darvish, who is still going strong at 38. Darvish missed considerable time last season with injuries and a family issue. But he was solid in his two postseason starts and remains a fan favorite. The other two holdovers are Dylan Cease and Michael King. The Padres were said to be exploring Cease's trade value as he approaches his final year of arbitration and team control. Cease had a strong regular season but will need a reset after struggling in the NLDS against the Dodgers. He lasted just five innings total in two starts and allowed eight earned runs. King had a big breakout season after coming over in the blockbuster trade that sent Juan Soto to the New York Yankees in December 2023. He went 13-9 with a 2.95 ERA and 201 strikeouts in 173.2 innings. The other options to round out the rotation are Randy Vásquez and knuckleballer Matt Waldron. In a move popular with the players and fans, the Padres gave pitching coach Ruben Niebla a new multi-year contract. Niebla has increased the use of analytics as he strives to get the best out of his pitchers.

BULLPEN

Closer Robert Suarez was a first-time All-Star and finished with 36 saves, third in the NL and fourth in the majors. General manager A.J. Preller transformed the bullpen into one of baseball's best at the trade deadline, when he acquired All-Star Tanner Scott and Bryan Hoeing from the Marlins and Jason Adam from the Rays. Scott reached free agency, but Hoeing and Adam return to a bullpen that also includes Jeremiah Estrada and Adrian Morejon.

MIDDLE INFIELD

Shortstop Xander Bogaerts has yet to really settle in two seasons after signing a \$280 million, 11-year free agent contract. He's been bothered by injuries and hasn't seemed comfortable on defense or at the plate. Some observers still question why the Padres made such a big commitment to Bogaerts in November 2022. At the time, Tatis still had 20 games left on an 80-game PED suspen-



Fernando Tatis Jr.

Petco Park

Opened: 2004 • Capacity: 39,860
 Left: 334' Center: 396' Right: 322'
 Tickets: 619-795-5555
mlb.com/PADRES

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Lowest single-season strikeout rate, 2018-24

1. 2024 Padres	17.6
2. 2022 Guardians	18.2
3. 2019 Astros	18.2
4. 2023 Guardians	18.7
5. 2018 Guardians	18.9

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sion and was being moved to right field to help keep him healthy. Jake Cronenworth remains solid at second base but struggled at the plate and finished with a .241 average. He's entering the second year of a seven-year, \$80 million contract.

CORNERS

Machado, the third baseman, remains the undisputed team leader. He had a slow start to 2024 due to offseason elbow surgery, but once healthy, he was back at the same high caliber of play fans have become accustomed to, both at the hot corner and at the plate. He became the franchise's all-time home run king with 167 and led the team with 29 in 2024. Preller obtained Luis Arraez from Miami in May to bat leadoff and play first. Arraez had four hits in his first game with the

Padres and went on to win the NL batting title at .314, becoming the first player in the modern era to win three straight batting crowns with three different teams. He was named to the All-Star team but didn't play due to a jammed left thumb that bothered him most of the season and required offseason surgery. As with Cease, the Padres were believed to be exploring Arraez's trade value entering his final season of team control.

OUTFIELD

Padres fans were disappointed when Merrill, the center fielder, lost out to Paul Skenes in balloting for the National League Rookie of the Year. At the very least, Merrill's incredible rookie season left the fans and organization excited about having the 21-year-old providing thrills with his bat and glove for years to come. When the Padres had just two outfielders on the roster last spring training, Merrill converted from shortstop to center field and made the Opening Day lineup. He's played with confidence and maturity from the beginning and has helped inject fun into the lineup. Tatis looks to play a full season after missing two months with a stress reaction in his right thigh bone. Tatis' power remains impressive as ever as he had some eye-popping shots among his 21 homers. He also connected four times in the playoffs, including three in five games against the Dodgers. Left fielder Jurickson Profar reached free agency after having a career year at age 31 and on a \$1 million contract. If the Padres don't re-sign Profar, they could either pursue another free agent or promote 25-year-old prospect Tirso Ornelas, who signed as an international amateur in July 2016 from Mexico.



Manny Machado

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

1B Luis Arraez (L)
RF Fernando Tatis Jr. (R)
CF Jackson Merrill (L)
3B Manny Machado (R)
2B Jake Cronenworth (L)
SS Xander Bogaerts (R)
LF Tirso Ornelas (L)
DH Eguy Rosario (R)
C Luis Campusano (R)

■ BENCH

C Brett Sullivan (L)
3B Tyler Wade (L)
OF Brandon Lockridge (R)
INF Mason McCoy (R)

■ ROTATION

RHP Dylan Cease
RHP Michael King
RHP Yu Darvish
RHP Randy Vásquez
RHP Matt Waldron

■ BULLPEN

RHP Robert Suarez (C)
RHP Jason Adam
RHP Jeremiah Estrada
LHP Adrian Morejon
LHP Yuki Matsui
RHP Bryan Hoeing
LHP Wandy Peralta
RHP Alek Jacob

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE PADRES "Xander Bogaerts has no range anymore, his bat has slowed down dramatically and he's got nine years left on that contract, so that's gonna be a drain on them. But Manny Machado's still really good, and Jackson Merrill has a chance to be a star in center field. They're really good against right-handed pitching, but they didn't handle lefties well enough. They see a lot of pitches and make pitchers work, and their pitching is really good. Dylan Cease has some of the best stuff in the league, and Michael King is nasty, but he throws so far across his body that I don't know how long he's gonna last; it's huge wear and tear on your shoulder. Yu Darvish is still good, but he's a five-inning guy now. And I love Jason Adam in the bullpen: His change-up's really good, his breaking ball's good, his fastball gets on you and he throws from a unique slot, which gives him some deception."

CATCHING

If the right deal comes along, the Padres could be looking to upgrade at catcher. Luis Campusano goes into the season as the projected starter after a season in which he was bothered by a thumb injury that limited him to only 91 games. He finished the season in Triple-A but is the Padres’ best option after Kyle Higashioka left as a free agent to sign with Texas. Campusano showed some power potential with eight home runs.

DH/BENCH

The Padres lost two valuable contributors when outfielder David Peralta and infielder Donovan Solano reached free agency. Infielder Tyler Wade returns and Brandon Lockridge, who made his big-league debut in 2024, will compete for the fourth outfielder spot. Brett Sullivan is expected to be the backup catcher. Arraez led the Padres with 46 starts at DH.

MANAGEMENT

Preller bolstered his job security by assembling a roster that overcame the flop of 2023 to reestablish itself as a playoff contender. He pulled off multiple deals all season, including trading for Cease during spring training, acquiring Arraez in early May and then bolstering the rotation and bullpen with his usual flurry of deals at the trade deadline. Manager Mike Shildt steadied the clubhouse in his first season in charge after internal turmoil surfaced during the disappointing 2023 season. Shildt finished second in NL Manager of the Year balloting and was rewarded with a two-year contract extension through 2027.

FINAL ANALYSIS

The Padres should make the playoffs again but will once again be chasing the behemoth up Interstate 5, the Dodgers. While the Dodgers are certainly the favorite to repeat as NL West champions, the Padres have shown they can stand toe-to-toe with them at times. While tightening the budget, ownership will rely on Preller even more for his ability to swing big trades without having to give up top prospects.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

HOME RUN KING Nate Colbert’s club career home record of 163 stood for 50 years until Manny Machado swatted his 164th at Seattle on Sept. 10. Machado has 167 homers in six seasons in San Diego and will no doubt put the record out of reach for a long time if he plays out the final nine years of his contract. He has 342 in his big-league career.

FUTBOL Speaking of Machado, he is a founding partner of the San Diego FC of Major League Soccer, which is playing its expansion season in 2025. Machado has made numerous appearances around town to promote SDFC, which is led by Mexican star Hirving “Chucky” Lozano.

BATTING CHAMP Luis Arraez became the first player in baseball’s modern era (since 1900) to win a batting title with three different teams, and he did it in three straight seasons. He was obtained from Miami on May 4 and finished with a .314 average, beating the Dodgers’ Shohei Ohtani (.310) and Atlanta’s Marcell Ozuna (.302). Arraez won the 2023 NL title with Miami (.354) and the 2022 AL title with Minnesota (.316). It was the first time a Padres player won the crown since Tony Gwynn in 1997, when he won the last of his eight titles.

COMEBACKS The Padres showed a much different mindset late in games and in extra innings than they did in 2023. They had 38 come-from-behind victories in 2024, the fourth-most in the National League. They tied the biggest comeback win in franchise history when they rallied from an eight-run deficit to beat the Chicago Cubs on April 8. They were 10-2 in extra-inning games after having the lowest winning percentage in the NL in 2023, .143 after going 2-12.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					27 ATL	28 ATL
						29 ATL
30 ATL	31 CLE	1 CLE	2 CLE	3	4 CHC	5 CHC
6 CHC	7 A's	8 A's	9 A's	10	11 COL	12 COL
13 COL	14 CHC	15 CHC	16 CHC	17	18 HOU	19 HOU
20 HOU	21 DET	22 DET	23 DET	24	25 TB	26 TB
27 TB	28	29 SF	30 SF			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 PIT	2 PIT
						3
4 PIT	5 NYY	6 NYY	7 NYY	8	9 COL	10 COL
11 COL	12 LAA	13 LAA	14 LAA	15	16 SEA	17 SEA
18 SEA	19	20 TOR	21 TOR	22	23 ATL	24 ATL
25 ATL	26 MIA	27 MIA	28 MIA	29	30 PIT	31 PIT
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1 PIT	2 SF	3 SF	4 SF	5 SF	6 MIL	7 MIL
8 MIL	9 LAD	10 LAD	11 LAD	12	13 ARI	14 ARI
15 ARI	16 LAD	17 LAD	18 LAD	19	20 KC	21 KC
22 KC	23 WAS	24 WAS	25 WAS	26	27 CIN	28 CIN
29 CIN	30 PHI					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1 PHI	2 PHI	3	4 TEX
						5 TEX
6 TEX	7 ARI	8 ARI	9 ARI	10 ARI	11 PHI	12 PHI
13 PHI	14	15	16	17	18 WAS	19 WAS
20 WAS	21 MIA	22 MIA	23 MIA	24 STL	25 STL	26 STL
27 STL	28 NYM	29 NYM	30 NYM	31		
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1 STL	2 STL
						3
4 STL	5 ARI	6 ARI	7 ARI	8	9 BOS	10 BOS
11 BOS	12 SF	13 SF	14 SF	15	16 LAD	17 LAD
18 LAD	19 SF	20 SF	21 SF	22	23 LAD	24 LAD
25 LAD	26 SEA	27 SEA	28 SEA	29	30 MIN	31 MIN
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1 BAL	2 BAL	3	4 COL	5 COL
						6
7 COL	8 CIN	9 CIN	10 CIN	11 COL	12 COL	13 COL
14 COL	15	16 NYM	17 NYM	18	19 CWS	20 CWS
21 CWS	22 MIL	23 MIL	24 MIL	25	26 ARI	27 ARI
28 ARI	29	30				

STATISTICIAN

5 Game-tying or go-ahead home runs Jackson Merrill hit in the ninth inning or later.

24 Scoreless innings to end the NLDS against the Dodgers.

111 Padres home runs at home in 2024, a club record.

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Ethan Salas, C (18)** Promoted to Double-A San Antonio in his first pro season.

■ **2. Leodalis De Vries, SS (18)** Five-tool guy was No. 1 international prospect.

■ **3. Kash Mayfield, LHP (20)** The 2024 first-rounder will make his pro debut this season.

■ **4. Boston Bateman, LHP (19)** The 6-foot-8 prep lefty shows a promising fastball and curve.

■ **5. Humberto Cruz, RHP (18)** Top international signing could be one of the youngest pitchers in Single-A.

■ **6. Kavares Tears, OF (22)** Toolsy college bat has power from the left side.

■ **7. Henry Baez, RHP (22)** Padres' Minor League Pitcher of the Year (2.99 ERA, 1.09 WHIP between High-A and Double-A).

■ **8. Isaiah Lowe, RHP (21)** Earned a late-season promotion to High-A Fort Wayne.

■ **9. Victor Lizarraga, RHP (21)** Has steadily climbed the ladder in the minors.

■ **10. Kale Fountain, 3B (19)** Career will be delayed after he had Tommy John surgery in October.

Padres Roster

President of Baseball Operations and General Manager: A.J. Preller • Manager: Mike Shildt • Coaches: Chris Apecechea (assistant, pitching), Morgan Burkhart (assistant), Brian Esposito (bench), Ben Fritz (bullpen), Tim Leiper (third base, infield and base running), David Macias (first base, outfield and base running), Mike McCoy (asst. hitting), Ruben Niebla (pitching), Pat O'Sullivan (asst. hitting), Victor Rodriguez (hitting), Scott Stroud (assistant), Peter Summerville (assistant, game planning)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO	
40	Jason Adam	R-R	6-3	229	8/4/91	SAN DIEGO	3-0	1.01	27	0	0	26.2	14	7	31	
						TAMPA BAY	4-2	2.49	47	0	4	47.0	26	16	50	
	Henry Baez	R-R	6-3	175	10/12/02	San Antonio (AA)	5-1	3.06	9	9	0	50.0	42	15	31	
						Fort Wayne (A+)	2-3	2.95	17	17	0	76.1	56	25	78	
	Ryan Bergert	R-R	6-1	210	3/8/00	San Antonio (AA)	2-10	4.78	23	23	0	98.0	99	33	87	
76	Jhony Brito	R-R	6-2	210	2/17/98	SAN DIEGO	1-2	4.12	26	0	0	43.2	49	10	29	
						El Paso (AAA)	0-2	9.00	6	6	0	14.0	22	9	9	
84	Dylan Cease	R-R	6-2	200	12/28/95	SAN DIEGO	14-11	3.47	33	33	0	189.1	137	65	224	
59	Tom Cosgrove	L-L	6-2	190	6/14/96	SAN DIEGO	0-1	11.66	18	0	0	14.2	23	6	15	
						El Paso (AAA)	1-3	4.85	32	0	0	29.2	25	14	34	
						Lake Elsinore (A)	0-0	5.40	2	1	0	1.2	2	1	3	
	Omar Cruz	L-L	6-0	210	1/26/99	El Paso (AAA)	1-2	4.42	14	5	0	38.2	33	23	48	
						San Antonio (AA)	5-0	3.59	20	2	2	47.2	36	13	70	
11	Yu Darvish	R-R	6-5	220	8/16/86	SAN DIEGO	7-3	3.31	16	16	0	81.2	65	22	78	
						Fort Wayne (A+)	0-1	16.20	1	1	0	3.1	7	1	3	
56	Jeremiah Estrada	S-R	6-1	185	11/1/98	SAN DIEGO	6-3	2.95	62	0	1	61.0	42	23	94	
						El Paso (AAA)	0-0	2.08	8	0	3	8.2	4	3	20	
78	Bryan Hoeing	R-R	6-6	210	10/19/96	SAN DIEGO	1-1	1.52	18	0	0	23.2	14	5	18	
						MIAMI	1-2	2.70	16	2	0	30.0	29	9	25	
						Jacksonville (AAA)	2-1	4.82	5	1	0	9.1	11	5	10	
						Jupiter (A)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	2.0	1	0	2	
37	Alek Jacob	L-R	6-3	190	6/16/98	SAN DIEGO	0-0	2.45	7	0	0	14.2	9	2	19	
						El Paso (AAA)	3-1	5.53	42	0	2	53.2	65	31	65	
34	Michael King	R-R	6-3	210	5/25/95	SAN DIEGO	13-9	2.95	31	30	0	173.2	144	63	201	
32	Stephen Kolek	R-R	6-3	210	4/18/97	SAN DIEGO	3-0	5.21	42	0	0	46.2	59	12	39	
1	Yuki Matsui	L-L	5-8	165	10/30/95	SAN DIEGO	4-2	3.73	64	0	0	62.2	46	27	69	
50	Adrian Morejón	L-L	5-11	224	2/27/99	SAN DIEGO	3-2	2.83	60	0	2	63.2	63	21	71	
						El Paso (AAA)	0-1	2.84	6	0	0	6.1	4	1	6	
44	Joe Musgrove	R-R	6-5	230	12/4/92	SAN DIEGO	6-5	3.88	19	19	0	99.2	94	23	101	
						Lake Elsinore (A)	0-0	5.40	1	1	0	3.1	4	0	2	
	Juan Nuñez	R-R	5-11	190	12/7/00	Aberdeen (A)	2-1	2.45	7	4	0	29.1	22	10	38	
58	Wandy Peralta	L-L	6-0	227	7/27/91	SAN DIEGO	3-2	3.99	46	0	0	38.1	33	13	22	
						San Antonio (AA)	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	1.0	0	0	1	
						Lake Elsinore (A)	1-0	0.00	2	1	0	2.1	0	1	2	
25	Sean Reynolds	L-R	6-8	250	4/19/98	SAN DIEGO	0-0	0.82	9	0	0	11.0	10	5	21	
						El Paso (AAA)	2-0	6.17	39	3	0	54.0	58	33	67	
75	Robert Suarez	R-R	6-2	210	3/1/91	SAN DIEGO	9-3	2.77	65	0	36	65.0	52	16	59	
98	Randy Vásquez	R-R	6-0	165	11/3/98	SAN DIEGO	4-7	4.87	20	20	0	98.0	119	29	62	
						El Paso (AAA)	2-6	8.21	10	10	0	41.2	60	13	44	
61	Matt Waldron	R-R	6-2	185	9/26/96	SAN DIEGO	7-11	4.91	27	26	0	146.2	145	40	133	
						El Paso (AAA)	1-0	4.58	4	4	0	19.2	18	3	17	
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
12	Luis Campusano	R-R	5-11	232	9/29/98	SAN DIEGO	.227	91	277	37	63	8	40	20	41	0
						El Paso (AAA)	.371	8	35	8	13	1	7	2	5	0
						Lake Elsinore (A)	.133	4	15	2	2	1	4	1	3	0
29	Brett Sullivan	L-R	5-10	195	2/22/94	SAN DIEGO	.188	7	16	1	3	1	2	1	4	0
						El Paso (AAA)	.263	101	396	70	104	17	63	49	60	3
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
4	Luis Arraez	L-R	5-10	175	4/9/97	SAN DIEGO	.318	117	500	61	159	4	41	16	18	9
						MIAMI	.299	33	137	22	41	0	5	8	11	0
2	Xander Bogaerts	R-R	6-2	218	10/1/92	SAN DIEGO	.264	111	428	50	113	11	44	28	79	13
						El Paso (AAA)	.182	4	11	1	2	0	0	4	4	0
						Lake Elsinore (A)	.571	2	7	3	4	0	1	1	1	0
9	Jake Cronenworth	L-R	6-0	187	1/21/94	SAN DIEGO	.241	155	577	72	139	17	83	61	118	5
13	Manny Machado	R-R	6-3	218	7/6/92	SAN DIEGO	.275	152	593	77	163	29	105	45	124	11
18	Mason McCoy	R-R	5-11	185	3/31/95	SAN DIEGO	.204	19	49	7	10	0	3	5	19	1
						El Paso (AAA)	.260	108	385	52	100	5	50	39	105	25
5	Eguy Rosario	R-R	5-7	150	8/25/99	SAN DIEGO	.245	30	53	5	13	3	6	2	20	0
						El Paso (AAA)	.263	95	354	67	93	21	70	51	88	19
14	Tyler Wade	L-R	6-1	188	11/23/94	SAN DIEGO	.217	90	138	28	30	0	8	11	29	8
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB
28	Brandon Lockridge	R-R	6-0	185	3/14/97	SAN DIEGO	.167	12	12	4	2	1	1	0	4	2
						El Paso (AAA)	.325	32	123	24	40	2	13	18	30	12
						Scranton/WB (AAA)	.295	72	217	37	64	0	32	39	62	34
3	Jackson Merrill	L-R	6-3	195	4/19/03	SAN DIEGO	.292	156	554	77	162	24	90	29	101	16
	Tirso Ornelas	L-R	6-3	200	3/11/00	El Paso (AAA)	.297	128	485	76	144	23	89	53	88	7
23	Fernando Tatis Jr.	R-R	6-3	217	1/2/99	SAN DIEGO	.276	102	398	64	110	21	49	32	96	11

San Francisco GIANTS

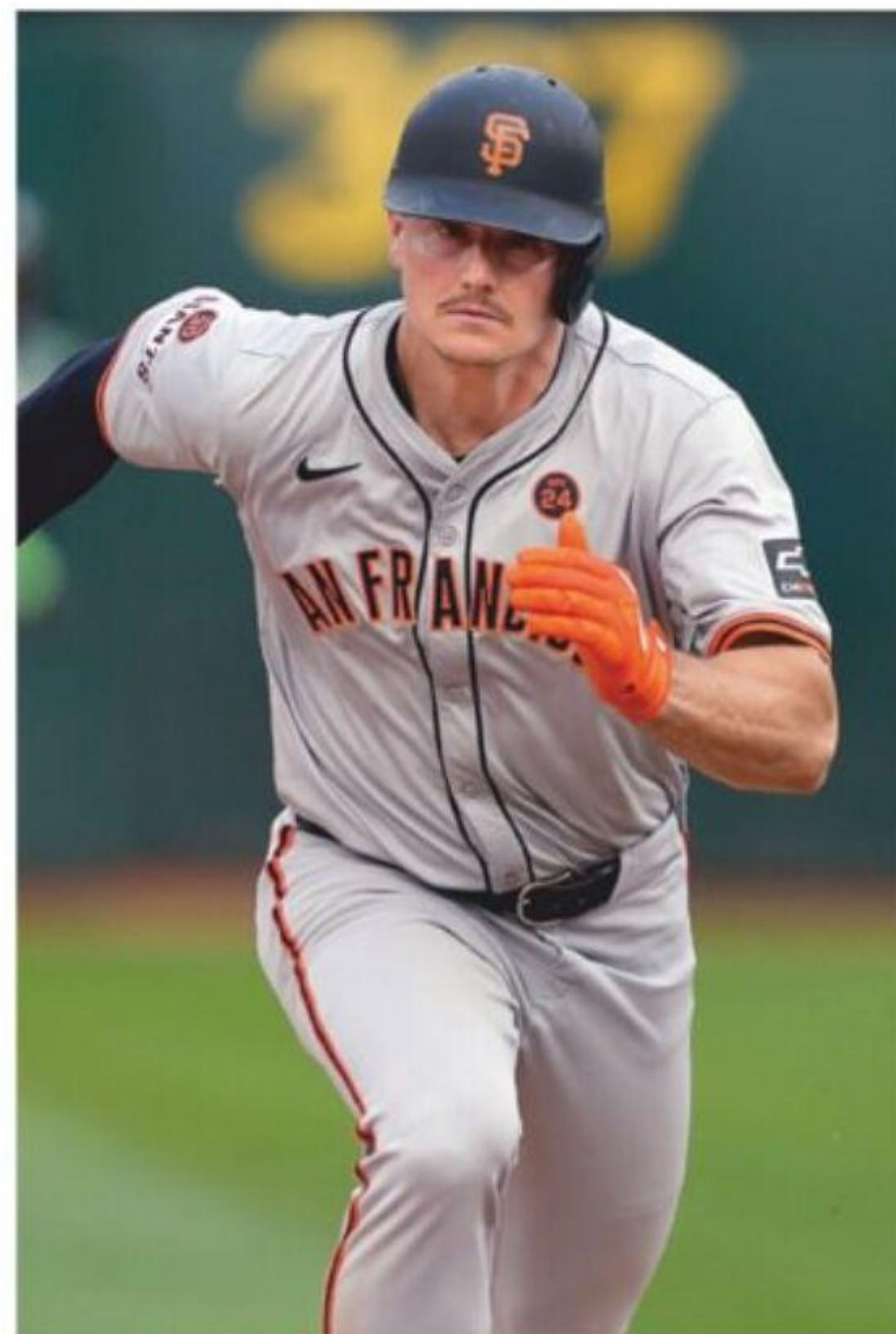
2025 PREDICTION

4TH

NL WEST

2024 FINISH: 4TH (80-82)

Buster Posey's acumen and leadership abilities were never in doubt when he was behind the plate while the Giants won three World Series championships from 2010-14. Now he'll try to apply those skills in another level of the arena as a rookie baseball executive. Just three years after playing his last game and subsequently buying into the team as a minority investor, Posey was installed as president of baseball operations in October. His leadership style is expected to be a departure from the roster churn and short-term commitments that marked six seasons under Farhan Zaidi. That much was apparent in December, when Posey made his first major transaction, signing shortstop Willy Adames to a seven-year, \$182 million contract with a full no-trade clause and no opt-outs — a contract that broke Posey's own record for the largest deal in franchise history. But it's going to be a long process for Posey to get the Giants back atop a rigorous NL West.



Matt Chapman

ROTATION

Logan Webb might be the most dependable innings sponge in the major leagues, but the Giants lacked other load-bearing pieces last season. They somehow threw the fewest rotation innings in the National League even though Webb logged the most in the NL for the second consecutive season. The hope is that two former Cy Young Award winners will be healthy enough to recapture their form. Robbie Ray will be ready to take the ball and resume his place as a rotation frontman following last year's return from reconstructive elbow surgery. And 42-year-old Justin Verlander, who arrived as a \$15 million free agent, will seek to pick up a share of the 38 victories he needs for 300 in his career. The investment in Verlander takes a little pressure off the young pitchers while also providing a role model. Kyle Harrison competed well despite a downturn in velocity and could be one of the better lefties in the game if the zip on his fastball returns. Hayden Birdsong matches a hammer curve with an easy, 98 mph fastball and has a high ceiling. Former St. Louis closer Jordan Hicks will continue his transition to the rotation, but the Giants will have other young options if it appears the bullpen is a better match for his stuff and stamina.

BULLPEN

Camilo Doval went from All-Star closer in 2023 to Triple-A Sacramento last August, but his slider and 100 mph two-seamer remain elite weapons if he can harness them. It'll be tough for Doval to displace Ryan Walker, a former 31st-round pick who used his extreme cross-body delivery to strike out 99 in 80 innings — the most strikeouts by a Giants reliever since Robb Nen in 1998. Identical twins Tyler and Taylor Rogers are coming off effective seasons, even if Taylor's stuff is down a tick from his All-Star peak. Former Phillies prospect Erik Miller was a coup in a small trade and has become one of the best left-on-left relievers in the game. The bullpen should be a team strength again.

MIDDLE INFIELD

The Giants identified shortstop as their greatest need and aggressively pursued the top free agent at the position, signing Adames a few months after he led

Oracle Park

Opened: 2000 • Capacity: 41,331
Left: 339' Center: 391' Right: 309'
Tickets: 415-972-2209
mlb.com/GIANTS

5-Year Win Trend



*Extrapolated to a 162-game season

Statline

Highest single-season pitching ground ball rate, 2021-24

1. 2023 Giants	48.7
2. 2024 Giants	48.4
3. 2022 Giants	47.7
4. 2022 Cardinals	47.2
5. 2024 Phillies	45.9

the Milwaukee Brewers to the NL Central title. Posey and the Giants were drawn to Adames' leadership skills and lunchpail mentality as much as his blend of baseball skills. His right-handed power combined with his plus baserunning ability should help a lineup that needed to add sock as well as athleticism. The signing of Adames pushes Tyler Fitzgerald to second base, where his range and arm will be more than playable. Casey Schmitt and Brett Wisely both did some nice things down the stretch and figure to see time around the infield as well.

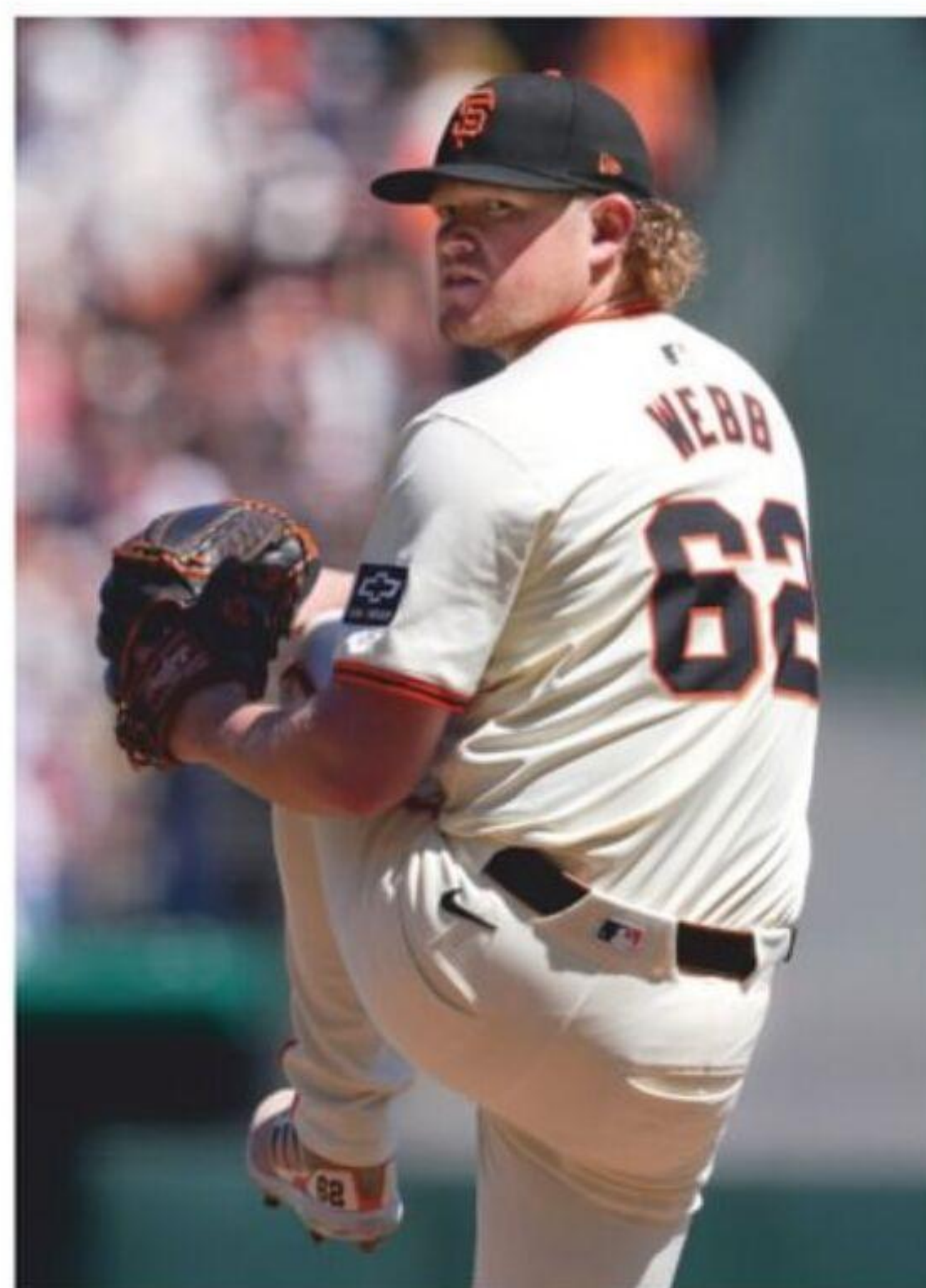
CORNERS

Although signing Adames was Posey's first official major move, he was also active in closing the deal on the six-year, \$151 million extension that Matt Chapman signed

in September, ensuring that the Gold Glove third baseman wouldn't opt out of his three-year contract after the first season. Chapman epitomizes what the Giants want to establish: lineup continuity, durability and defensive excellence. His 68 extra-base hits last season were the most by a Giant since Pablo Sandoval (74) in 2009. At first base, the Giants entered 2025 with an apparent status quo of LaMonte Wade Jr. and Wilmer Flores. (It'll be top prospect Bryce Eldridge before too long.)

OUTFIELD

Jung Hoo Lee was improving from week to week last season before sustaining a season-ending left shoulder dislocation while crashing into the outfield fence May 12. The Giants were pleased with his recovery and expect the contact-hitting savant to resume his place in center field and atop their lineup in 2025. Lee's shoulder was among a rash of outfield injuries in May that allowed Heliot Ramos, a forgotten former top prospect, to get some major league runway. He made the most of the chance and hit his way onto the NL All-Star team — the organization's first drafted and developed outfielder to represent them since Chili Davis in 1986. But it'll be up to Ramos to keep establishing himself after his numbers fell off in the second half. Mike Yastrzemski, a Gold Glove finalist in right field, is back in his final year of salary arbitration, but it's unclear whether he will have a right-handed platoon partner. It could be Luis Matos, who had one of the greatest weeks in franchise history — 17 RBIs over six games in May — and tore up the Venezuelan League over the winter but has struggled in the past when given extended looks.



Logan Webb

PROJECTED LINEUP

■ LINEUP

CF	Jung Hoo Lee (L)
SS	Willy Adames (R)
1B	LaMonte Wade Jr. (L)
3B	Matt Chapman (R)
LF	Heliot Ramos (R)
RF	Mike Yastrzemski (L)
DH	Jerar Encarnacion (R)
2B	Tyler Fitzgerald (R)
C	Patrick Bailey (S)

■ BENCH

1B	Wilmer Flores (R)
INF	Brett Wisely (L)
INF	Casey Schmitt (R)
C	Tom Murphy (R)

■ ROTATION

RHP	Logan Webb
LHP	Robbie Ray
RHP	Justin Verlander
LHP	Kyle Harrison
RHP	Hayden Birdsong

■ BULLPEN

RHP	Ryan Walker (C)
RHP	Sean Hjelle
RHP	Tristan Beck
RHP	Jordan Hicks
LHP	Erik Miller
LHP	Taylor Rogers
RHP	Tyler Rogers
RHP	Camilo Doval

SCOUTING REPORT

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP THE GIANTS "I don't like the team they're putting together. They paid a lot of money for shortstop Willy Adames, but what's the allure? What makes him special? He's got power, but that's where it ends, and right-handed power goes nowhere in San Francisco. He's just OK on defense; he sits back on balls, and he's lost a step. That's not the right guy for them, and I think the same about third baseman Matt Chapman. He has a speed limit — he can't hit plus velocity very well. Both those contracts are gonna be bad in the end. Catcher Patrick Bailey is really good defensively, but he can't hit. Jung Hoo Lee is gonna be a bad contract. Logan Webb is really reliable, and Jordan Hicks has potential as a starter, but he's gotta hold up. They need some combination of Kyle Harrison, Hayden Birdsong and Keaton Winn to step up, and I don't know if they can. Robbie Ray is all fastball at this point. And they've got some good bullpen arms, but Camilo Doval has really regressed."

CATCHING

Gold Glove winner Patrick Bailey led all catchers in framing runs (16) and defensive runs saved (20), and no one in the majors had a faster average release time to second base (1.85 seconds). Bailey was having an above-average offensive season relative to his position, too, before a woeful run in August in which he went 4-for-64 and couldn't buy a cheap hit. It'll be important for Bailey to stay fresh, so it's a concern that his projected backup is Tom Murphy, an oft-injured bat-first catcher who didn't play after spraining his knee in May.

DH/BENCH

The Giants gave up positional flexibility with the DH spot last season when they signed Jorge Soler to a three-year, \$42 million contract and then watched him totally forget how to drive in runs. They escaped the remainder of the contract by trading him to Atlanta (who then traded him to the Angels) and are expected to rotate players through the DH spot this season, with Jerar Encarnacion among those who might offer the most power potential. Grant McCray is among the most exciting position players who debuted last season, but he'll need to cut down that 40 percent strikeout rate to be anything more than a bench player.

MANAGEMENT

Bob Melvin is a highly respected three-time Manager of the Year who has been doing the job for more than two decades. But his first season in San Francisco, running the team he grew up rooting for, was an exercise in frustration. He acknowledged that he didn't always go with his gut while learning new personnel as well as the priorities of Zaidi's analytically inclined baseball operations group. There shouldn't be much doubt about how the Giants will identify now. If the Giants decide that they want to go in another direction, or if the Melvin-Posey partnership doesn't quite work out, then the club could decline to exercise an option on Melvin for 2026.

FINAL ANALYSIS

Zaidi left the Giants better than he found them in 2019, and his raise-the-floor method of roster construction had its share of successes. But even with Adames, the Giants still looked like a .500 team as the calendar turned to 2025 — and that won't inspire much confidence in the rigorous NL West.



BEYOND THE BOX SCORE

FITZING RIGHT IN Tyler Fitzgerald will be hoping to build on a breakout season in which his 132 wRC+ was the highest among qualified major league rookies and a scorching run in August was among the most impressive in franchise history. He joined Barry Bonds, Robby Thompson, Jack Clark and Willie Mays as the only Giants to homer in five consecutive games since the team moved to San Francisco in 1958. He also became the first Giant to hit at least 11 home runs in a 17-game span since Bonds in 2003. And he was just the fourth shortstop in major league history to pull off that feat, joining Trea Turner, Troy Tulowitzki and Alex Rodriguez.

YOUNG ARMS It wasn't by design, but the Giants ended up leading the National League in innings by rookie pitchers last season. Their 536.1 rookie innings were second to the Oakland A's in the major leagues and accounted for 37.4 percent of the team's total innings. It was the most rookie innings logged by a Giants staff since 1975. They'll be relying heavily on improvement from all those young pitchers if they hope to contend in 2025.

SLOWDOWN AHEAD It's not hard to see why the Giants are emphasizing athleticism in their attempts to improve the offense. They finished dead last among NL clubs in stolen bases for the second consecutive season, even though Tyler Fitzgerald (17) and Matt Chapman (15) became the first pair of Giants teammates to steal 15-plus since Grégor Blanco and Ángel Pagán in 2014.

Schedule						
HOME AWAY						
MARCH & APRIL						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				27	28	29
				CIN		CIN
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
CIN	HOU	HOU	HOU		SEA	SEA
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
SEA	CIN	CIN	CIN		NYN	NYN
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
NYN	PHI	PHI	PHI	PHI	LAA	LAA
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
LAA	MIL	MIL	MIL	MIL	TEX	TEX
27	28	29	30			
TEX		SD	SD			
MAY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
				COL	COL	COL
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
COL	CHC	CHC	CHC		MIN	MIN
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
MIN	ARI	ARI	ARI		A's	A's
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
A's	KC	KC	KC		WAS	WAS
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
WAS	DET	DET	DET		MIA	MIA
JUNE						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
MIA	SD	SD	SD	SD	ATL	ATL
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
ATL		COL	COL	COL	LAD	LAD
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
LAD		CLE	CLE	CLE	BOS	BOS
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
BOS		MIA	MIA	MIA	CWS	CWS
29	30					
CWS	ARI					
JULY						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		ARI	ARI	ARI	A's	A's
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A's	PHI	PHI	PHI		LAD	LAD
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
LAD		ALL-STAR BREAK			TOR	TOR
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
TOR	ATL	ATL	ATL		NYM	NYM
27	28	29	30	31		
NYM	PIT	PIT	PIT			
AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
					NYM	NYM
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
NYM	PIT	PIT	PIT		WAS	WAS
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
WAS	SD	SD	SD		TB	TB
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
TB	SD	SD	SD	SD	MIL	MIL
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
MIL		CHC	CHC	CHC	BAL	BAL
31						
BAL						
SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	COL	COL	COL		STL	STL
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
STL	ARI	ARI	ARI		LAD	LAD
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
LAD	ARI	ARI	ARI	LAD	LAD	LAD
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
LAD	STL	STL	STL		COL	COL
28	29	30				
COL						

STATISTICIAN

8-14 The Giants' record in games last season when they had a chance to go over the .500 mark.

613 Innings thrown by Logan Webb since the start of 2022, the most in the major leagues ahead of Aaron Nola (598) and Corbin Burnes (590).

TOP 10 PROSPECTS



■ **1. Bryce Eldridge, 1B (20)**
Flexed his immense power in the Arizona Fall League

■ **2. Carson Whisenhunt, LHP (24)** He has one of the best changeups in the minor leagues.

■ **3. James Tibbs III, OF (22)**
Value is in his contact skills and zone awareness.

■ **4. Rayner Arias, OF (18)** Received a \$2.7 million bonus out of the Dominican Republic.

■ **5. Walker Martin, SS (21)**
Giants hope he continues to grow into his 6-foot-2 frame.

■ **6. Joe Whitman, LHP (23)**
Runs fastball up to 97 mph and has two playable secondary pitches.

■ **7. Dakota Jordan, OF (21)** Gifted athlete has loads of bat speed and received an over-slot bonus as a fourth-rounder.

■ **8. Trevor McDonald, RHP (24)** Used a sinking fastball that touches 98 mph to throw three scoreless innings in MLB debut.

■ **9. Jhonny Level, SS (18)** Could play anywhere up the middle as he advances.

■ **10. Reggie Crawford, LHP (24)**
His current ceiling: a hard-throwing lefty out of the bullpen.

Giants Roster

General Manager: Zack Minasian • Manager: Bob Melvin • Coaches: Garvin Alston (bullpen), Oscar Bernard (asst. hitting), Alex Burg (catching), Pat Burrell (hitting), Ryan Christenson (bench), Mark Hallberg (first base), J.P. Martinez (pitching), Damon Minor (asst. hitting), Taira Uematsu (major league quality control), Matt Williams (third base)

No.	Pitchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	W-L	ERA	G	GS	SV	IP	H	BB	SO					
43	Tristan Beck	R-R	6-4	165	6/24/96	SAN FRANCISCO	0-0	1.69	7	1	0	16.0	14	4	14					
60	Hayden Birdsong	R-R	6-4	215	8/30/01	Sacramento (AAA)	0-1	7.90	5	5	0	13.2	22	3	17					
						SAN FRANCISCO	5-6	4.75	16	16	0	72.0	57	43	88					
						Sacramento (AAA)	1-0	5.00	2	2	0	9.0	8	6	14					
76	Spencer Bivens	R-R	6-5	205	6/28/94	Richmond (AA)	4-2	2.05	11	11	0	48.1	33	20	61					
						SAN FRANCISCO	3-1	3.14	27	2	1	48.2	47	11	37					
						Sacramento (AAA)	5-1	2.92	27	0	8	49.1	42	17	42					
47	Mason Black	R-R	6-3	230	12/10/99	SAN FRANCISCO	1-5	6.44	9	8	0	36.1	46	15	31					
						Sacramento (AAA)	5-6	4.59	20	20	0	84.1	78	39	87					
75	Camilo Doval	R-R	6-2	185	7/4/97	SAN FRANCISCO	5-3	4.88	62	0	23	59.0	54	39	78					
						Sacramento (AAA)	1-0	3.18	5	0	0	5.2	2	1	7					
45	Kyle Harrison	R-L	6-2	200	8/12/01	SAN FRANCISCO	7-7	4.56	24	24	0	124.1	125	42	118					
12	Jordan Hicks	R-R	6-2	220	9/6/96	SAN FRANCISCO	4-7	4.10	29	20	1	109.2	112	47	96					
64	Sean Hjelle	R-R	6-11	228	5/7/97	SAN FRANCISCO	3-4	3.90	58	0	0	80.2	84	14	75					
						Sacramento (AAA)	0-0	0.00	3	0	0	4.0	2	0	6					
						San Jose (A)	0-0	13.50	2	0	0	1.1	3	1	1					
72	Trevor McDonald	R-R	6-2	200	2/26/01	SAN FRANCISCO	0-0	0.00	1	0	0	3.0	0	1	1					
						Sacramento (AAA)	2-3	4.72	10	8	0	47.2	46	14	36					
						Richmond (AA)	0-2	3.21	3	3	0	14.0	13	4	8					
						Eugene (A+)	0-1	4.86	5	5	0	16.2	17	10	25					
						ACL Giants (R)	1-1	3.52	5	4	0	7.2	7	2	9					
68	Erik Miller	L-L	6-5	240	2/13/98	SAN FRANCISCO	4-5	3.88	73	10	0	67.1	50	38	87					
	Carson Ragsdale	R-R	6-8	225	5/25/98	Sacramento (AAA)	2-4	5.03	13	12	0	53.2	60	26	57					
38	Robbie Ray	L-L	6-2	225	10/1/91	Richmond (AA)	3-3	3.49	14	14	0	67.0	46	31	90					
						SAN FRANCISCO	3-2	4.70	7	7	0	30.2	20	15	43					
						Sacramento (AAA)	1-0	2.53	3	2	0	10.2	4	4	12					
						San Jose (A)	1-0	3.09	3	3	0	11.2	8	2	18					
73	Randy Rodriguez	R-R	6-0	166	9/5/99	ACL Giants (R)	0-1	5.14	4	4	0	7.0	7	0	15					
						SAN FRANCISCO	3-2	4.30	35	1	0	52.1	47	18	53					
						Sacramento (AAA)	1-1	1.69	10	0	1	10.2	7	4	10					
33	Taylor Rogers	L-L	6-3	190	12/17/90	SAN FRANCISCO	1-4	2.40	64	0	0	60.0	53	22	64					
71	Tyler Rogers	R-R	6-3	181	12/17/90	SAN FRANCISCO	3-4	2.82	77	0	1	70.1	67	6	51					
65	Landen Roupp	R-R	6-2	205	9/10/98	SAN FRANCISCO	1-2	3.58	23	4	0	50.1	43	26	47					
						Sacramento (AAA)	0-1	3.80	8	6	0	21.1	14	14	30					
						ACL Giants (R)	0-0	0.00	3	2	0	5.0	2	0	12					
						Carson Seymour	R-R	6-6	260	12/16/98	Sacramento (AAA)	7-10	4.82	29	28	0	134.1	151	60	132
						Justin Verlander	R-R	6-5	235	2/20/83	HOUSTON	5-6	5.48	17	17	0	90.1	98	27	74
74	Ryan Walker	R-R	6-2	200	11/26/95	Sugar Land (AAA)	0-1	10.50	2	2	0	6.0	9	3	9					
						Corpus Christi (AA)	0-1	6.75	2	2	0	8.0	11	1	8					
						SAN FRANCISCO	10-4	1.91	76	1	10	80.0	50	18	99					
62	Logan Webb	R-R	6-1	220	11/18/96	SAN FRANCISCO	13-10	3.47	33	33	0	204.2	202	50	172					
67	Keaton Winn	R-R	6-4	238	2/20/98	SAN FRANCISCO	3-8	7.16	12	12	0	55.1	56	20	48					
						ACL Giants (R)	0-0	2.45	1	0	0	3.2	2	2	6					
No.	Catchers	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB				
14	Patrick Bailey	S-R	6-0	210	5/29/99	SAN FRANCISCO	.234	121	401	46	94	8	46	39	100	4				
19	Tom Murphy	R-R	6-1	206	4/3/91	SAN FRANCISCO	.118	13	34	3	4	1	2	4	14	0				
2	Blake Sabol	L-R	6-4	225	1/7/98	SAN FRANCISCO	.313	11	32	3	10	0	1	5	9	0				
						Sacramento (AAA)	.246	97	345	50	85	11	54	48	98	11				
						Richmond (AA)	.200	3	10	3	2	1	4	0	3	0				
No.	Infielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB				
2	Willy Adames	R-R	6-1	219	9/2/95	MILWAUKEE	.251	161	610	93	153	32	112	74	173	21				
26	Matt Chapman	R-R	6-0	215	4/28/93	SAN FRANCISCO	.247	154	575	98	142	27	78	64	158	15				
49	Tyler Fitzgerald	R-R	6-1	205	9/15/97	SAN FRANCISCO	.280	96	314	53	88	15	34	22	108	17				
						Sacramento (AAA)	.310	17	71	17	22	8	21	9	24	1				
41	Wilmer Flores	R-R	6-2	213	8/6/91	SAN FRANCISCO	.206	71	214	19	44	4	26	20	33	0				
						Sam Huff	R-R	6-4	240	1/14/98	TEXAS	.000	3	3	0	0	0	1	2	0
						Round Rock (AAA)	.246	111	435	49	107	13	69	39	150	0				
37	Marco Luciano	R-R	6-1	178	9/10/01	SAN FRANCISCO	.211	27	76	10	16	0	3	5	28	0				
						Sacramento (AAA)	.250	83	316	55	79	10	42	65	103	4				
10	Casey Schmitt	R-R	6-2	215	3/1/99	SAN FRANCISCO	.252	40	107	11	27	6	16	4	25	0				
						Sacramento (AAA)	.274	74	292	45	80	13	58	31	70	11				
32	David Villar	R-R	6-1	215	1/27/97	SAN FRANCISCO	.257	11	35	3	9	1	4	1	13	0				
						Sacramento (AAA)	.260	106	408	70	106	16	77	60	124	2				
31	LaMonte Wade Jr.	L-L	6-1	205	1/1/94	SAN FRANCISCO	.260	117	331	45	86	8	34	62	90	2				
						Sacramento (AAA)	.143	3	7	3	1	0	0	4	2	0				
0	Brett Wisely	L-R	5-9	180	5/8/99	SAN FRANCISCO	.238	91	252	25	60	4	31	13	65	2				
						Sacramento (AAA)	.301	41	156	30	47	6	21	23	28	5				
No.	Outfielders	B-T	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	2024 Club	AVG	G	AB	R	H	HR	RBI	BB	SO	SB				
59	Jerar Encarnacion	R-R	6-4	250	10/22/97	SAN FRANCISCO	.248	35	113	13	28	5	19	5	34	1				
						Sacramento (AAA)	.352	33	125	21	44	10	33	18	35	1				
51	Jung Hoo Lee	L-R	6-1	192	8/20/98	SAN FRANCISCO	.262	37	145	15	38	2	8	10	13	2				
29	Luis Matos	R-R	5-11	160	1/28/02	SAN FRANCISCO	.213	45	150	14	32	5	25	5	24	0				
						Sacramento (AAA)	.256	80	328	42	84	14	53	28	40	8				
58	Grant McCray	L-R	6-2	190	12/7/00	Richmond (AA)	.333	1	3	0	1	0	1	1	0	0				
						SAN FRANCISCO	.202	37	124	13	25	5	10	6	56	5				
						Sacramento (AAA)	.272	47	191	35	52	6	29	21	54	8				
53	Wade Meckler	L-R	5-9	178	4/21/00	Richmond (AA)	.210	50	181	27	38	6	24	24	67	6				
						Sacramento (AAA)	.288	44	177	27	51	8	27	19	25	3				
						Richmond (AA)	.324	10	37	6	12	0	2	5	10	0				
17	Heliot Ramos	R-R	5-11	188	9/7/99	Eugene (A+)	.429	4	14	2	6	0	1	4	3	1				
						San Jose (A)	.235	13	51	5	12	1	6	8	10	0				
						ACL Giants (R)	.228	16	57	11	13	0	5	9	13	5				
						SAN FRANCISCO	.269	121	475	54	128	22	72	37	135	6				
5	Mike Yastrzemski	L-L	5-10	178	8/23/90	Sacramento (AAA)	.296	30	115	23	34	8	21	16	37	2				
						SAN FRANCISCO	.231	140	428	60	99	18	57	38	124	3				

2025 FANTASY BASEBALL

Here is the Athlon Sports big board for 2025 fantasy baseball, including a Top 150, designed to balance “true talent” with current ADP trends to provide a guide for your draft. These rankings assume a 15-team standard league and chart a course for navigating the first 10 rounds of a draft. We use a standard of 20 games played for position eligibility. Let’s do this! **BY WILSON KARAMAN**



TOP 150

1. SHOHEI OHTANI, UT/SP, LAD

The reigning three-time MVP, world champion and founder of the 50-50 Club would like to remind you that not only will he once again be hitting between two other future Hall of Famers at the top of LA’s stacked lineup, but he’s also a borderline top-20 starting pitcher who should be clear to throw 130 innings to boot.

MARK J. REBILAS-USA TODAY SPORTS

2. BOBBY WITT JR., SS, KC

Yeah, winning a batting title en route to going 30-30 at 24 years old is cool, but when you can do it while hitting the ball harder than everyone except four other dudes while also being the fastest man in baseball, it hints at so, so much more to come. A middling supporting cast is all that limits him from a counting stat perspective.

**3. AARON JUDGE, OF, NYY**

Remember, you're drafting for regular-season production here. There's been nobody better for it over the past eight years than a healthy Judge. The risk of catastrophic age-related decline is not serious yet, and he's coming off a third straight season leading the world in barrel rate. Losing Juan Soto hurts, and there's risk of lost time, but the lineup around him will be fine, and Yankee Stadium remains a paradise for his power.

4. ELLY DE LA CRUZ, SS, CIN

If there's a category for Exciting Baseball Plays in your league, De La

Cruz is first off the board. He's coming off a 25-67 full-season debut at age 22, and the counting stat ceiling is higher than just about anybody's. There is whiff-fueled AVG risk, but that risk won't matter a lick if he hits even a narrow majority of the counting-stat ceiling.

5. GUNNAR HENDERSON, SS, BAL

Second-half slowdown notwithstanding, all the ingredients are here for Henderson to solidify himself among the game's elite annually for a long time. His Statcast page is a sea of dark red, with nominal upside remaining as he continues to refine his approach. Despite a not-great home park, the Baltimore lineup should be stacked up and down again, and he'll be poised to build on last year's 210 R+RBI.

6. JOSÉ RAMÍREZ, 3B, CLE

He's a durable, quiet juggernaut of a player coming off a near 40-40 season at an important and thin position. The history of guys with his body type aging well is mixed at best, and under-the-hood stats like barrel rate, exit velocity and bat speed have never really stood out. And yet he hits, and steals, constantly. It's OK to fade him in the top five, but don't let him fall.

7. JUAN SOTO, OF, NYM

Big hype comes with big contracts, and Soto did struggle (relatively) in his first crack at a big-hype situation after moving to San Diego. But he's fresh off carrying the Yanks to the end of October and entering the prime of a HOF-track career with a solid lineup surrounding him. He'll lose a couple of dingers in the ballpark, but his power plays anywhere. He's a top-3 pick in OBP leagues.

8. MOOKIE BETTS, SS/OF, LAD

Losing out on GOAT-tier position eligibility by two games at the keystone is a bummer, and at 32 he's also missed chunks of two of

the past four seasons with injuries. But this is still an elite five-category producer at the top of the best 1-2-3 in modern baseball history. The versatility is awesome, and the production will play anywhere.

9. KYLE TUCKER, OF, CHC

One of the best power-speed combos around, playing for his money contract at 28 and coming off an injury-riddled yet highly productive season. The lineup and ballpark downgrades are legit, particularly the latter. But he made significant improvements to an already-strong approach last year and started hitting the ball the other way much more regularly and with authority. There's another gear if it all comes together.

10. PAUL SKENES, SP, PIT

Rookie campaigns don't go much better than Skenes'. He rode top-tier command of outrageous stuff to a sub-2.00 ERA and sub-1.00 WHIP across 133 innings. He dominates righties and lefties alike. No holes. Sitting 99 and not (as of yet) having a Tommy John on your ledger is a thing in today's game. This is the top SP1 in any league format.

11. CORBIN CARROLL, OF, ARI

Carroll's elite baserunning propped up his fantasy value while he fought the sophomore slump demons. His second-half power surge came despite OK-not-great contact and a low launch angle, and the Phoenix humidor is no fun. Yet he still managed to claw his way into the top 40 in standard leagues last year. That's the floor, and 25-50 atop a good lineup is the ceiling.

12. FRANCISCO LINDOR, SS, NYM

Another 30-30-ish season punctuated a stretch that has seen Lindor average nearly 700 plate appearances per year over the past three atop a Mets lineup that adds one of the great hitters in the game for 2025. He brings high-end, five-category production, durability and consistency at a critical spot.

13. TARIK SKUBAL, SP, DET

Wire-to-wire dominance rewarded those who bet on his 80.1 dominant innings in 2023. A massive workload increase included lots of high-stress innings in September and October.

But if we assume that all pitching investment is a huge gamble, his sinker-slider-change combo is as lethal as it gets. Rare is the proven 200-inning ace in this day and age.



14. JULIO RODRÍGUEZ, OF, SEA

A stagnant third full season saw Rodríguez once again struggle for months on end before catching fire late to restore some shine. This time, a high ankle sprain limited the comeback. He's 24 and possesses 40-40-caliber talent. He'll have to overcome the worst home park for hitters and improve against breaking stuff to get there. He's among the more volatile first-rounders.

15. FERNANDO TATIS JR., OF, SD

Tatis has two full seasons since his 2022 PED suspension, and his ISO is down 100 points over that time. Take that with however many grains of salt you want, especially given the role injuries have played. He's a risky proposition, though the ceiling remains plenty high. Healthy legs

and a return to 20-plus stolen bases would go a long way toward solidifying his standing.

16. RONALD ACUÑA JR., OF, ATL

His ADP will be interesting to watch through spring training, and depending on how his legs look early on, he may be going off the board well before or after this ranking in late drafts. If you're the ramblin' and gamblin' type, a turn combo with Acuña can win you a title. He is, after all, one year removed from the only 40-70 season in history.

17. VLADIMIR GUERRERO JR., 1B, TOR

Despite everything going wrong for Toronto's offense, just about everything went right for Vladito in 2024. A three-year trend of lowering his whiff rate and chasing less culminated with a batting title run. He may not have another 48-homer monster in him like 2021, but he's playing this year to cash nine figures next winter, and there are no warning lights flashing in the 26-year-old's metrics.

18. YORDAN ALVAREZ, OF, HOU

This may just be the year a healthy Alvarez hits 40 homers. It's a day late for his lineup context, but he's got the second-highest wRC+ of any hitter over the past three seasons, and a .950 bankable OPS to anchor your offense is just fine around the turn. Counting stats take care of themselves when that's your baseline.

19. JACKSON CHOURIO, OF, MIL

A couple of rough months of adjustment notwithstanding, Chourio flashed every bit of his elite power/speed potential en route to a 20-20 season at 20 years old. An extremely aggressive approach may lead to streaky production, and Milwaukee's a tough place to hit. But his expected stats supported the breakout production last year, and at just 21 on Opening Day, the sky's the limit.

20. JARREN DURAN, OF, BOS

Duran was a points league monster in a breakout campaign last year, leading the majors in both 2B and 3B while hitting 21 HR and stealing 34 bags. After hitting lefties OK in 2023, he was bad (.665 OPS) against them, and the splits limit his margin for error. Boston's offense and park are perfect fits, and he offers many paths to fantasy value.

21. TREA TURNER, SS, PHI

A hamstring injury cost Turner time and explosiveness, but he still posted a 21-19 with a strong AVG and solid R+RBI rates. Turner's approach and batted ball markers have never been particularly impressive, but he's hit .290 or better five times in the past six seasons with a 27-homer, 33-bag average per-162. He brings strong across-the-board production at an up-the-middle position.

22. ZACK WHEELER, SP, PHI

Last year's NL WHIP champ and Cy runner-up, Wheeler is one of the most consistent high-end starters in the game. He's maintained better than a 4:1 K:BB ratio for four years running, and his 22.7 fWAR during that time is the best of any SP. In his age-35 season, time isn't on his side, but Philly's offense should again provide ample W opportunities.

23. JACKSON MERRILL, OF, SD

Merrill looked every bit the part in his first full season. An aggressive approach is the biggest knock, and losing SS eligibility also stings. His expected stats were uniformly better than his actual production, hinting at untapped upside, and he showed a particular knack for squaring balls up in damage counts. He slugged .571 from June on after settling into the majors, and if he takes a step forward at 22, it's a 30-20 bat in a stacked lineup.

24. BRYCE HARPER, 1B, PHI

A model of consistent-when-healthy production, Harper was fully recovered from Tommy John surgery and logged 145 games last year. At 32, another trip (or two) to the IL should be factored in, but for game-by-game production, there are few more reliable. If he can get back to chipping in double-digit steals, all the better.

25. EMMANUEL CLASE, RP, CLE

A career-high 47 saves and ridiculous ERA and WHIP vaulted Clase to the top of the closer heap and the sixth-best overall fantasy season. His strikeout rate isn't notable, but the movement of his 99 mph cutter is, and he excels at keeping the ball off of barrels.

26. FREDDIE FREEMAN, 1B, LAD

At 35, skill decline is certainly a concern. His exit velocity did slide a little for the fifth straight year, but there weren't jarring signs of catastrophe in his batted-ball profile. He's a good bet to rebound to a .300 clip with 20-some-odd homers.

27. KETEL MARTE, 2B, ARI

98th-percentile exit velocity and an 84th-percentile barrel rate make for

a swell combination that, in Marte's case, produced a career high 36 dingers. Durability is a historical concern, though he's been able to stay on the field more often lately. He offers consistent four-category production at the keystone, and he'll chip in some steals.

28. RAFAEL DEVERS, 3B, BOS

Improvements to an already-excellent approach led to more walks and better swing decisions for Devers last season, though nagging shoulder issues tempered his second-half production. At some point soon, he'll head across the diamond, but for now, he remains a top option at the hot corner. Boston's coming wave of top-tier prospect talent offers a glimpse of hope for improved lineup depth around him as well.

29. JAZZ CHISHOLM JR., 3B/OF, NYY

How lucky do you feel, punk? Chisholm finally managed to log more than 125 games in his fourth try, and he went 24-40. The move to the Bronx got him rolling, and he gets a full 81 games there. Underlying metrics aren't as good as the production, and the many ghosts of injuries past will scare some off. It's a lot of upside to ignore, though.

30. CORBIN BURNES, SP, ARI

The move from one stacked division to another isn't the greatest development, but it's a nice boost in supporting cast. When you're talking about a guy who is top three in IP and Ks with top-seven ratios in all of baseball over the past three seasons, contextual factors only matter so much.

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| ☐ 31. WILLIAM CONTRERAS, C, MIL | ☐ 61. TEOSCAR HERNÁNDEZ, OF, LAD | ☐ 91. HUNTER GREENE, SP, CIN | ☐ 121. IAN HAPP, OF, CHC |
| ☐ 32. LOGAN GILBERT, SP, SEA | ☐ 62. FÉLIX BAUTISTA, RP, BAL | ☐ 92. JORDAN WESTBURG, 2B/3B, BAL | ☐ 122. JAKE BURGER, 1B/3B, TEX |
| ☐ 33. AUSTIN RILEY, 3B, ATL | ☐ 63. PABLO LÓPEZ, SP, MIN | ☐ 93. RILEY GREENE, OF, DET | ☐ 123. EZEQUIEL TOVAR, SS, COL |
| ☐ 34. MICHAEL HARRIS II, OF, ATL | ☐ 64. OZZIE ALBIES, 2B, ATL | ☐ 94. CAL RALEIGH, C, SEA | ☐ 124. BRICE TURANG, 2B, MIL |
| ☐ 35. MATT OLSON, 1B, ATL | ☐ 65. AARON NOLA, SP, PHI | ☐ 95. TYLER GLASNOW, SP, LAD | ☐ 125. CHRISTIAN YELICH, OF, MIL |
| ☐ 36. COLE RAGANS, SP, KC | ☐ 66. FRAMBER VALDEZ, SP, HOU | ☐ 96. WILLSON CONTRERAS, C, STL | ☐ 126. J.T. REALMUTO, C, PHI |
| ☐ 37. MANNY MACHADO, 3B, SD | ☐ 67. MARCELL OZUNA, UT, ATL | ☐ 97. BRYAN REYNOLDS, OF, PIT | ☐ 127. MATT CHAPMAN, 3B, SF |
| ☐ 38. ONEIL CRUZ, SS/OF, PIT | ☐ 68. ANDRÉS MUÑOZ, RP, SEA | ☐ 98. ANTHONY SANTANDER, OF, FA | ☐ 128. JARED JONES, SP, PIT |
| ☐ 39. DYLAN CEASE, SP, SD | ☐ 69. LUIS CASTILLO, SP, SEA | ☐ 99. WILL SMITH, C, LAD | ☐ 129. SHANE McCLANAHAN, SP, TB |
| ☐ 40. COREY SEAGER, SS, TEX | ☐ 70. BRENTON DOYLE, OF, COL | ☐ 100. SPENCER SCHWELLENBACH, SP, ATL | ☐ 130. PETE CROW-ARMSTRONG, OF, CHC |
| ☐ 41. MASON MILLER, RP, A's | ☐ 71. MICHAEL KING, SP, SD | ☐ 101. MARK VIENTOS, 3B, NYM | ☐ 131. LUCAS ERCEG, RP, KC |
| ☐ 42. PETE ALONSO, 1B, FA | ☐ 72. SALVADOR PEREZ, C, KC | ☐ 102. ROYCE LEWIS, 3B, MIN | ☐ 132. ALEX BREGMAN, 3B, FA |
| ☐ 43. GARRETT CROCHET, SP, BOS | ☐ 73. ROBERT SUAREZ, RP, SD | ☐ 103. MARCUS SEMIEN, 2B, TEX | ☐ 133. YUSEI KIKUCHI, SP, LAA |
| ☐ 44. JACOB DEGROM, SP, TEX | ☐ 74. SHOTA IMANAGA, SP, CHC | ☐ 104. SONNY GRAY, SP, STL | ☐ 134. SPENCER STRIDER, SP, ATL |
| ☐ 45. JOSE ALTUVE, 2B, HOU | ☐ 75. BRYCE MILLER, SP, SEA | ☐ 105. CHRISTIAN WALKER, 1B, HOU | ☐ 135. ADOLIS GARCÍA, OF, TEX |
| ☐ 46. DEVIN WILLIAMS, RP, NYY | ☐ 76. LUIS ROBERT JR., OF, CWS | ☐ 106. LUIS GARCÍA JR., 2B, WAS | ☐ 136. DYLAN CREWS, OF, WAS |
| ☐ 47. CHRIS SALE, SP, ATL | ☐ 77. ROKI SASAKI, SP, FA | ☐ 107. RYAN WALKER, RP, SF | ☐ 137. RANDY AROZARENA, OF, SEA |
| ☐ 48. GEORGE KIRBY, SP, SEA | ☐ 78. KYLE SCHWARBER, UT, PHI | ☐ 108. JOE RYAN, SP, MIN | ☐ 138. ANTHONY VOLPE, SS, NYY |
| ☐ 49. CJ ABRAMS, SS, WAS | ☐ 79. TANNER BIBEE, SP, CLE | ☐ 109. MATT McLAIN, 2B/SS, CIN | ☐ 139. PARKER MEADOWS, OF, DET |
| ☐ 50. WYATT LANGFORD, OF, TEX | ☐ 80. BRENT ROOKER, UT, A's | ☐ 110. TRISTON CASAS, 1B, BOS | ☐ 140. JASSON DOMÍNGUEZ, OF, NYY |
| ☐ 51. GERRIT COLE, SP, NYY | ☐ 81. WILLY ADAMES, SS, SF | ☐ 111. MAX FRIED, SP, NYY | ☐ 141. BO BICHETTE, SS, TOR |
| ☐ 52. EDWIN DÍAZ, RP, NYM | ☐ 82. LAWRENCE BUTLER, OF, A's | ☐ 112. CODY BELLINGER, 1B/OF, NYY | ☐ 142. STEVEN KWAN, OF, CLE |
| ☐ 53. BLAKE SNELL, SP, LAD | ☐ 83. SEIYA SUZUKI, OF, CHC | ☐ 113. SPENCER STEER, 1B/OF, CIN | ☐ 143. BRYAN WOO, SP, SEA |
| ☐ 54. YOSHINOBU YAMAMOTO, SP, LAD | ☐ 84. HUNTER BROWN, SP, HOU | ☐ 114. MIKE TROUT, OF, LAA | ☐ 144. CARLOS RODÓN, SP, NYY |
| ☐ 55. JOSH HADER, RP, HOU | ☐ 85. GRAYSON RODRIGUEZ, SP, BAL | ☐ 115. ZAC GALLEN, SP, ARI | ☐ 145. BRYSON STOTT, 2B, PHI |
| ☐ 56. ADLEY RUTSCHMAN, C, BAL | ☐ 86. JHOAN DURAN, RP, MIN | ☐ 116. JOSH NAYLOR, 1B, ARI | ☐ 146. FRANCISCO ALVAREZ, C, NYM |
| ☐ 57. RYAN HELSLEY, RP, STL | ☐ 87. JUNIOR CAMINERO, 3B, TB | ☐ 117. JUSTIN STEELE, SP, CHC | ☐ 147. ZACH NETO, SS, LAA |
| ☐ 58. JAMES WOOD, OF, WAS | ☐ 88. BAILEY OBER, SP, MIN | ☐ 118. LOGAN O'HOPPE, C, LAA | ☐ 148. SANDY ALCANTARA, SP, MIA |
| ☐ 59. YAINER DIAZ, C, HOU | ☐ 89. FREDDY PERALTA, SP, MIL | ☐ 119. VINNIE PASQUANTINO, 1B, KC | ☐ 149. RYAN PEPIOT, SP, TB |
| ☐ 60. RAISEL IGLESIAS, RP, ATL | ☐ 90. LOGAN WEBB, SP, SF | ☐ 120. JACK FLAHERTY, SP, FA | ☐ 150. XANDER BOGAERTS, 2B/SS, SD |

POSITIONAL RANKINGS



CATCHER

1. William Contreras, MIL
2. Adley Rutschman, BAL
3. Yainer Diaz, HOU
4. Salvador Perez, KC
5. Cal Raleigh, SEA
6. Willson Contreras, STL
7. Will Smith, LAD
8. Logan O'Hoppe, LAA
9. J.T. Realmuto, PHI
10. Francisco Alvarez, NYM
11. Shea Langeliers, A's
12. Austin Wells, NYY
13. Tyler Stephenson, CIN
14. Sean Murphy, ATL
15. Gabriel Moreno, ARI

BEST OF THE REST: Bo Naylor, Connor Wong, Joey Bart, Dalton Rushing



FIRST BASE

1. Vladimir Guerrero Jr., TOR
2. Bryce Harper, PHI
3. Freddie Freeman, LAD
4. Matt Olson, ATL
5. Pete Alonso, FA
6. Christian Walker, HOU
7. Triston Casas, BOS
8. Cody Bellinger, NYY (OF)
9. Spencer Steer, CIN (3B)
10. Josh Naylor, ARI
11. Vinnie Pasquantino, KC
12. Jake Burger, TEX (3B)
13. Michael Toglia, COL
14. Paul Goldschmidt, NYY
15. Yandy Díaz, TB

BEST OF THE REST: Christian Encarnacion-Strand, Rhys Hoskins, Spencer Horwitz



SECOND BASE

1. Ketel Marte, ARI
2. Jose Altuve, HOU
2. Ozzie Albies, ATL
3. Jordan Westburg, BAL (3B)
4. Marcus Semien, TEX
5. Luis García Jr., WAS
6. Matt McLain, CIN (SS)
7. Brice Turang, MIL
8. Bryson Stott, PHI
9. Xander Bogaerts, SD (SS)
10. Jackson Holliday, BAL
11. Luis Rengifo, LAA (3B)
12. Nico Hoerner, CHC
13. Gleyber Torres, DET
14. Andrés Giménez, TOR
15. Luis Arraez, SDG (1B)

BEST OF THE REST: José Caballero (SS/3B), Jonathan India, Willi Castro (SS/3B/OF)



THIRD BASE

1. José Ramírez, CLE
2. Rafael Devers, BOS
3. Jazz Chisholm Jr., NYY (OF)
4. Austin Riley, ATL
5. Manny Machado, SD
6. Junior Caminero, TB
7. Jordan Westburg, BAL (2B)
8. Mark Vientos, NYM
9. Royce Lewis, MIN
10. Matt Chapman, SF
11. Alex Bregman, FA
12. Jake Burger, TEX (1B)
13. Alec Bohm, PHI
14. Josh Jung, TEX
15. Nolan Arenado, STL

BEST OF THE REST: Isaac Paredes, Max Muncy, Connor Norby

SHORTSTOP

1. Bobby Witt Jr., KC
2. Elly De La Cruz, CIN
3. Gunnar Henderson, BAL
4. Mookie Betts, LAD (OF)
5. Francisco Lindor, NYM
6. Trea Turner, PHI
7. Oneil Cruz, PIT (OF)
8. Corey Seager, TEX
9. CJ Abrams, WAS
10. Willy Adames, SF
11. Matt McLain, CIN (2B)
12. Ezequiel Tovar, COL
13. Anthony Volpe, NYY
14. Bo Bichette, TOR
15. Zach Neto, LAA

BEST OF THE REST: Ceddanne Rafaela (OF), Masyn Winn, Ha-Seong Kim

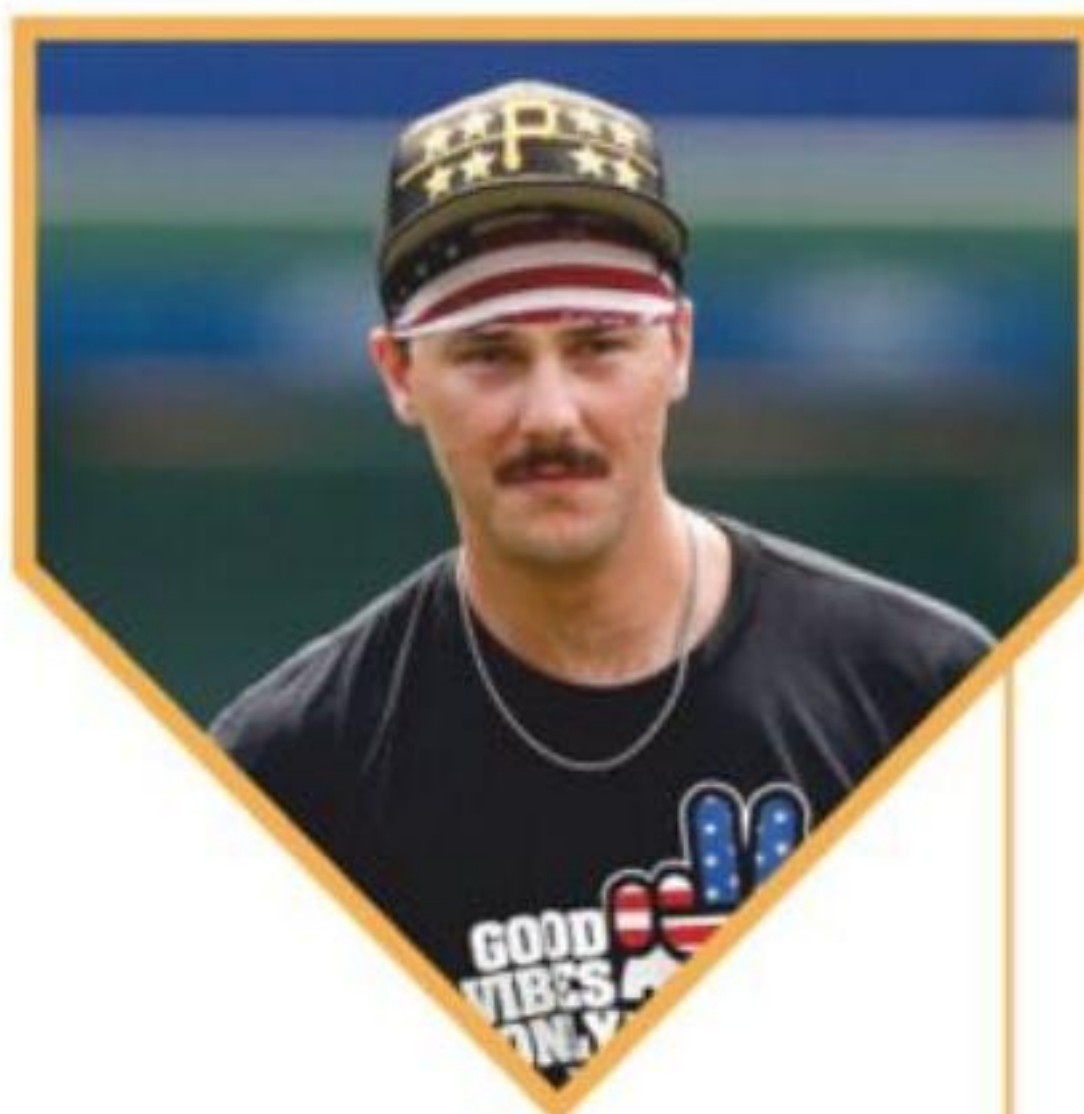
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CHARLES LECLAIRE-IMAGN IMAGES; DAN HAMILTON-IMAGN IMAGES; MICHAEL MCLOONE-IMAGN IMAGES; WENDELL CRUZ-IMAGN IMAGES



OUTFIELD

1. Aaron Judge, NYY
2. Juan Soto, NYM
3. Mookie Betts, LAD (SS)
4. Kyle Tucker, CHC
5. Corbin Carroll, ARI
6. Julio Rodríguez, SEA
7. Fernando Tatis Jr., SD
8. Ronald Acuña Jr., ATL
9. Yordan Alvarez, HOU
10. Jackson Chourio, MIL
11. Jarren Duran, BOS
12. Jackson Merrill, SD
13. Jazz Chisholm Jr., NYY (3B)
14. Michael Harris II, ATL
15. Oneil Cruz, PIT (SS)
16. Wyatt Langford, TEX
17. James Wood, WAS
18. Teoscar Hernández, LAD
19. Brenton Doyle, COL
20. Luis Robert Jr., CWS
21. Lawrence Butler, A's
22. Seiya Suzuki, CHC
23. Riley Greene, DET
24. Bryan Reynolds, PIT
25. Anthony Santander, FA
26. Cody Bellinger, NYY (1B)
27. Spencer Steer, CIN (1B)
28. Mike Trout, LAA
29. Ian Happ, CHC
30. Christian Yelich, MIL
31. Pete Crow-Armstrong, CHC
32. Adolis García, TEX
33. Dylan Crews, WAS
34. Randy Arozarena, SEA
35. Parker Meadows, DET
36. Jasson Domínguez, NYY
37. Steven Kwan, CLE
38. Lane Thomas, CLE
39. Ceddanne Rafaela, BOS (SS)
40. Tyler O'Neill, BAL

BEST OF THE REST: Heliot Ramos, Alec Burleson, Garrett Mitchell, Lars Nootbaar, Nolan Jones, Willyer Abreu, Jo Adell, Michael Conforto, Jonny DeLuca, Trevor Larnach, Pavin Smith



STARTING PITCHER

1. Paul Skenes, PIT
2. Tarik Skubal, DET
3. Zack Wheeler, PHI
4. Corbin Burnes, ARI
5. Logan Gilbert, SEA
6. Cole Ragans, KC
7. Dylan Cease, SD
8. Garrett Crochet, BOS
9. Jacob deGrom, TEX
10. Chris Sale, ATL
11. George Kirby, SEA
12. Gerrit Cole, NYY
13. Blake Snell, LAD
14. Yoshinobu Yamamoto, LAD
15. Pablo López, MIN



RELIEF PITCHER

1. Emmanuel Clase, CLE
2. Mason Miller, A's
3. Devin Williams, NYY
4. Edwin Díaz, NYM
5. Josh Hader, HOU
6. Ryan Helsley, STL
7. Raisel Iglesias, ATL
8. Félix Bautista, BAL
9. Andrés Muñoz, SEA
10. Robert Suarez, SD

BEST OF THE REST: Blake Treinen, Luke Weaver, Jason Adam, Edwin Uceta, Orion Kerkering, Evan Phillips, David Bednar, Jeff Hoffman, José Alvarado, Jeremiah Estrada, Edgardo Henriquez

16. Aaron Nola, PHI
17. Framber Valdez, HOU
18. Luis Castillo, SEA
19. Michael King, SD
20. Shota Imanaga, CHC
21. Bryce Miller, SEA
22. Roki Sasaki, FA
23. Tanner Bibee, CLE
24. Hunter Brown, HOU
25. Bailey Ober, MIN
26. Hunter Greene, CIN
27. Freddy Peralta, MIL
28. Logan Webb, SF
29. Grayson Rodriguez, BAL
30. Tyler Glasnow, LAD
31. Spencer Schwellenbach, ATL
32. Sonny Gray, STL
33. Joe Ryan, MIN
34. Max Fried, NYY
35. Zac Gallen, ARI
36. Justin Steele, CHC
37. Jack Flaherty, FA
38. Shane Bieber, TB
39. Jared Jones, PIT
40. Yusei Kikuchi, LAA
41. Spencer Strider, ATL
42. Bryan Woo, SEA
43. Carlos Rodón, NYY
44. Sandy Alcantara, MIA
45. Ryan Pepiot, TB
46. Kodai Senga, NYM
47. Kevin Gausman, TOR
48. Seth Lugo, KC
49. Cristopher Sánchez, PHI
50. Taj Bradley, TB

BEST OF THE REST: Luis Gil, Brandon Pfaadt, MacKenzie Gore, Tanner Houck, Jackson Jobe, Bowden Francis, Nick Martinez, Jesús Luzardo, Zebby Matthews, Jake Irvin, Eury Pérez, Max Meyer, Hayden Wesneski

11. Jhoan Duran, MIN
12. Ryan Walker, SF
13. Lucas Erceg, KC
14. Peter Fairbanks, TB
15. Michael Kopech, LAD
16. Tanner Scott, FA
17. Ben Joyce, LAA
18. Griffin Jax, MIN
19. Trevor Megill, MIL
20. Justin Martinez, ARI

LATE-ROUND DRAFT VALUES

See, the thing about fantasy baseball drafts? You have to draft 25-plus players in most leagues. While championships are often lost on account of early-draft missteps, they are rarely won without lightning-in-a-bottle catches much further down the draft queue. Identifying up-and-coming and undervalued talent that can provide crucial stats on the cheap is every bit as critical a component for a championship run as the stars at the top of the list.

Here are players at different points outside of your draft's top 150 who can return strong value relative to their current draft positions. For ADP, we are using data provided by National Fantasy Championship (NFC).

ADP 151-200

SETH LUGO, SP, KC

A year after successfully converting to the rotation in San Diego, Lugo emerged as a surprise 200-inning starter and compiled his way to the sixth-best SP season. His strikeout rate is a shell of its bullpen self, but he has evolved his arsenal and posted positive run values with six different pitches. He'll need to go another 200 innings to match last year's value, but even if he doesn't, he's a very nice value pick for the middle of your rotation at his draft range.



TAJ BRADLEY, SP, TB

Baseball is a game of adjustments, and Bradley found that out the hard way during an up-and-down rookie campaign. After looking like the best young pitcher in baseball over his first 14 starts, he struggled mightily for a half-dozen before righting the ship in September. The ups were very high, though, especially given Bradley's prospect pedigree. A high upside play at this stage.

ADP 201-250

NOLAN JONES, OF, COL

Jones was never right in 2024 with back and knee issues throughout the season, and he failed to build on his breakout 20-20 season in 2023. A strikeout rate north of 30 percent for his career is alarming, too. Jones was the rarest of Rockies souls to post reverse home/road splits during that aforementioned breakout, and he hits lefties fine. An everyday 27-year-old with a high walk rate, power, speed and half his games at Coors is not the worst thing to take a gamble on after

you've cleared 200 picks.



mix that generated 98th-percentile whiffs, 99th-percentile chases and 89th-percentile grounders. He is currently going around 275th, some 200 picks behind the man presumed ahead of him for SV in Minnesota. If the Twins try this former starter in the rotation as rumored, there's more intrigue, but he's draftable as a bargain here even if they don't.

ADP 251-300

GRIFFIN JAX, RP, MIN

Jax saved only 10 games last year, but he put up the 12th-best season of any fantasy pitcher on the strength of a nasty five-pitch

ADP 301-350

JESÚS LUZARDO, SP, PHI

Velocity matters a lot for Luzardo; when he's healthy and pumping 96, his strikeout rate is excellent, and he is very effective. When he's hurt and the velocity ticks down, he gets lit up like a lightbulb. Last year's injuries screeched his 2023 progress to a halt, but after pick 300, you won't feel bad about dropping him if the gas doesn't light this spring.

ADP 351-400

KYLE MANZARDO, UT, CLE

Manzardo excelled in his first taste of the majors and did so despite whiff and walk rates not in line with stellar minor-league numbers. A solid hitter with an excellent approach and solid pop, he just needs a path to playing time, and the bat is good enough to keep him in the lineup and return strong value on his draft position.

ADP 401-500

EURY PÉREZ/MAX MEYER, SPs, MIA

Pérez flashed elite stuff and SP1-level production as a 20-year-old over 90 innings in 2023 before succumbing to TJ last spring. He's an excellent draft-and-hold for a midseason return. This spotlight assumes he doesn't get the Meyer Treatment, though. The Marlins butchered their former top-three pick's own return from TJ last year, shuttling him off to Triple-A for an unproductive batch of abbreviated starts. Don't sleep on a rebound, however, because it remains a frontline profile, and it won't cost you much at all to see if he is him again in 2025.

ADP 500+

HAYDEN WESNESKI, SP/RP, HOU

Any time the Astros acquire a pitcher, he's worth a peek, and when the pitcher has a bona fide 80-grade pitch as good as Wesneski's sweeper, it's all the more reason for intrigue. Chicago struggled to unlock Wesneski's stuff, but there's plenty of it to play with. At this depth, it is right to bet on elite raw skills.

BREAKOUT CANDIDATES



PARKER MEADOWS, OF, DET

A dreadful start and subsequent demotion, injury and then: .296/.340/.500 with 6 HR, 5 SB, and a wildly reduced strikeout rate over the final two full months of the season. Meadows made discernable strides contacting the baseball more frequently and with better launch angles over the course of the season, and he's a former second-rounder with an everyday job who is a good bet to lead off. A 20-20 season highlighting balanced five-category production is there for the taking.

MICHAEL TOGLIA, 1B, COL

Toglia hit 25 HR in 116 games in 2024 but finished only 30th among 1B in standard-league value on account of a poor AVG and low counting stats. A whole lot moved markedly in the right direction last year — EV, barrel rate, hard-hit rate. Everything except his monstrous whiff rate. Still, he's relatively cheap for the upside, and it won't take much more improvement to push comfortably into the top-15 1B options.

DJ HERZ, SP, WAS

Herz flashed huge upside in his third MLB start, whiffing 13 across six innings of one-hit ball. It's a nasty combination of stuff that has yielded high whiff rates throughout his professional career. Walks held back his prospect development, but he was largely able to keep them in check during his debut, and expected ERA indicators all suggested he was unlucky at times last season. His ceiling is as high as he can keep his walk rate low.

HELIOT RAMOS, OF, SF

Ramos ripped the ball after his call-up, finishing in the top 15 in barrel rate ahead of guys like Oneil Cruz and Teoscar Hernández. The park stinks, but he hit in the top third of the lineup for most of the season, and there's enough speed to push into double-digit steals. He's a no-doubt start against LHP, and continued progression against RHP can push him to a 25-10 with strong counting stats and a decent AVG in his sophomore season.



GAVIN WILLIAMS, SP, CLE

Williams spent a lot of last year wandering in an unlucky wilderness, following a spring elbow injury and an amended pitch mix that never really seemed to click. His fastball plays above its velocity thanks to elite extension, and the secondary arsenal has plenty of raw stuff to complement it. Consistency and a better pitch mix are the key ingredients, and Cleveland has proven

to be one of the best organizations in the game for helping players find those things. Bet on the talent.

CONNOR NORBY, 3B, MIA

Contact is the big question for Norby, who struck out in a third of his MLB plate appearances after posting a 23 percent K rate in the minors. His swing is optimized for lift and damage when he does connect, the sprint speed is 94th-percentile, and free from Baltimore's logjam, he's got a straight path to an everyday role in his new home. It's not hard to squint and see a 25-15 player, even if the AVG is a dicier proposition.



SPENCER ARRIGHETTI, SP, HOU

All that's missing is a fastball. Arrighetti (and his fantasy managers) rode a roller coaster throughout his rookie season, which included both double-digit K spectaculars and one-inning disasters aplenty. When he was right, multiple breakers gave batters fits, and he was able to harness his control notably in the second half, when he pitched to a 2.91 ERA with the No. 12 K-BB rate. The heater was his biggest liability, but Houston's one of the best places around at helping hurlers find better fastball shape and effectiveness.

POST-HYPE GUYS

It's not too late for these talented but thus far underachieving players

Chasing the shiny new object is a natural human proclivity. And yet focusing on the Next Big Thing often blinds us to another important group of players: the Next Big Things of seasons past. Here are some “post-hype” guys who still have a whole lot of talent, but for one reason or another haven't been able to fully tap into it just yet. Their prices are lower — in some cases a lot lower — as a result, and that makes them interesting options as your draft moves along into the middle and later stages.



JACKSON HOLLIDAY, 2B, BAL

Holliday was downright awful in his first couple cracks at MLB pitching, and the struggles have tumbled him down past the 200th pick in early drafts this year. It's a good reminder that counting on immediate success for a 20-year-old rookie isn't the safest bet. But the skills that made Holliday last year's consensus No. 1 prospect haven't gone anywhere (he went right back to posting an OPS around .900 back at Triple-A). It may not click immediately, but it's more likely than not to click at some point, and you're getting a nice discount on the potential at his current ADP range.

EVAN CARTER, OF, TEX

Expectations for Carter were over the moon heading into last season. He'd been dogged by back issues

for several years, and after a horrific start, he succumbed, spending the rest of the season on the shelf. The result of that toxic cocktail is a current ADP north of 250, making Carter one of the more intriguing bounce-back candidates entering draft season. Nicknamed “Full Count Carter” as a prospect due to an impeccable approach, Carter still boasts average pop and 97th-percentile sprint speed. A return to health can unlock his ceiling as soon as this year.

BO NAYLOR, C, CLE

Catchers follow weird developmental paths with the stick, and Naylor's OPS dropped 195 points amid K and BB rates that moved rapidly in the wrong directions in his first crack at full-time duty. He's just a year removed from putting up an OPS north of .850 with 24 HR between Triple-A and the bigs, though, and the true offensive talent is closer to that than what we saw last year. He's not a top target, but after the first dozen backstops are off the board, he's an intriguing flyer, particularly as a C2 in two-catcher leagues.

NOELVI MARTE, 3B, CIN

The former top prospect lost 80 games to a PED suspension then struggled mightily in his first 200-plus PAs of big-league opportunity on return. He still flashed high-end bat speed and 86th-percentile wheels, however, and he plays in one of the best places on the planet for right-handed power. Jeimer Candelario is his primary roadblock to regular time, but Marte's power-speed combination is much more intriguing if he shows he can put the pieces back together this spring. A former seventh overall pick,



NICK LODOLO, SP, CIN

Lodolo hasn't quite been able to put it all together just yet, largely due to a parade of injuries. The parade kept right on parading last year, and a string of bad luck pushed his ERA to 4.76 in his 115 innings. The stuff graded out among the top 30 starters in baseball, and his curveball's a legitimate hammer. The price tag is just right around pick 250 to find out if this is the year it all finally comes together.

JORDAN WALKER, OF, STL

St. Louis has toggled the former consensus top-5 prospect back and forth between the majors and Triple-A for two straight seasons, and he struggled substantially to get his feet under him last year in particular. He still boasts otherworldly bat speed and high-end exit velocities, however, and will be all of 22 on Opening Day. The Cardinals have pledged a full season of ABs, and there are worse things to do than bet on a breakthrough from this kind of talent after the 250th pick, which is where he's going in drafts right now.

BOBBY MILLER, SP, LAD

A popular breakout pick this time last year, Miller was the toast of prognostication town following a scoreless 11-strikeout debut. And that was the end of that: Multiple IL trips and a demotion lowlighted an eventual 8.52 ERA, 1.77 WHIP effort that included one of the worst average exit velocities allowed in the game. Still, at the end game of deep-league drafts, snagging a former first-rounder who sits 98 and works for the best pitching factory of an organization on the planet isn't the worst option.

FROM LEFT: REGGIE HILDRED-IMAGN IMAGES; ALBERT CESARE/THE ENQUIRER

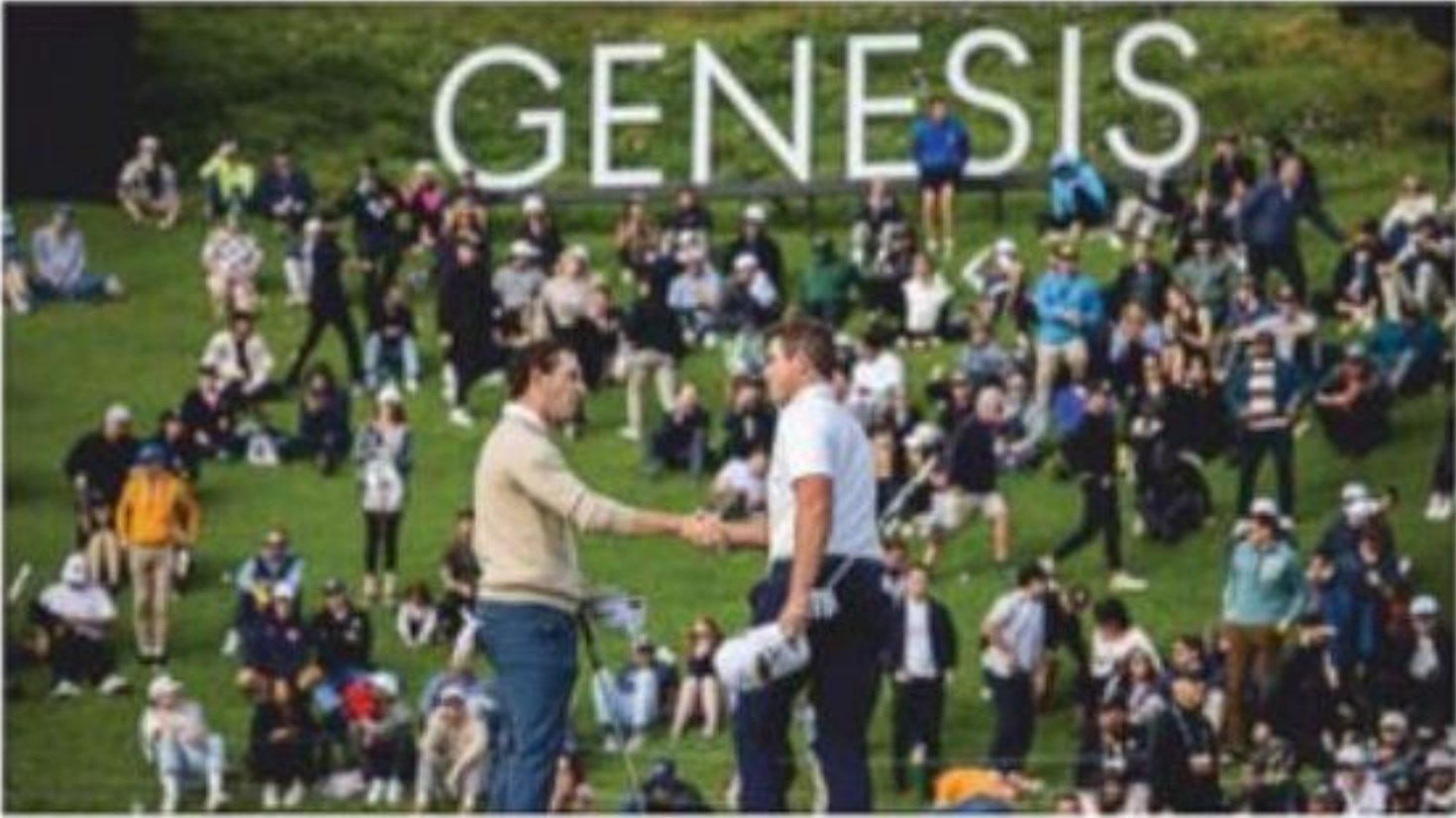
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GENESIS

OPINION

With Pacific Palisades Ablaze, It's Time to Move the Genesis

ALEX MICELI • JAN 9, 2025 6:54 PM EST

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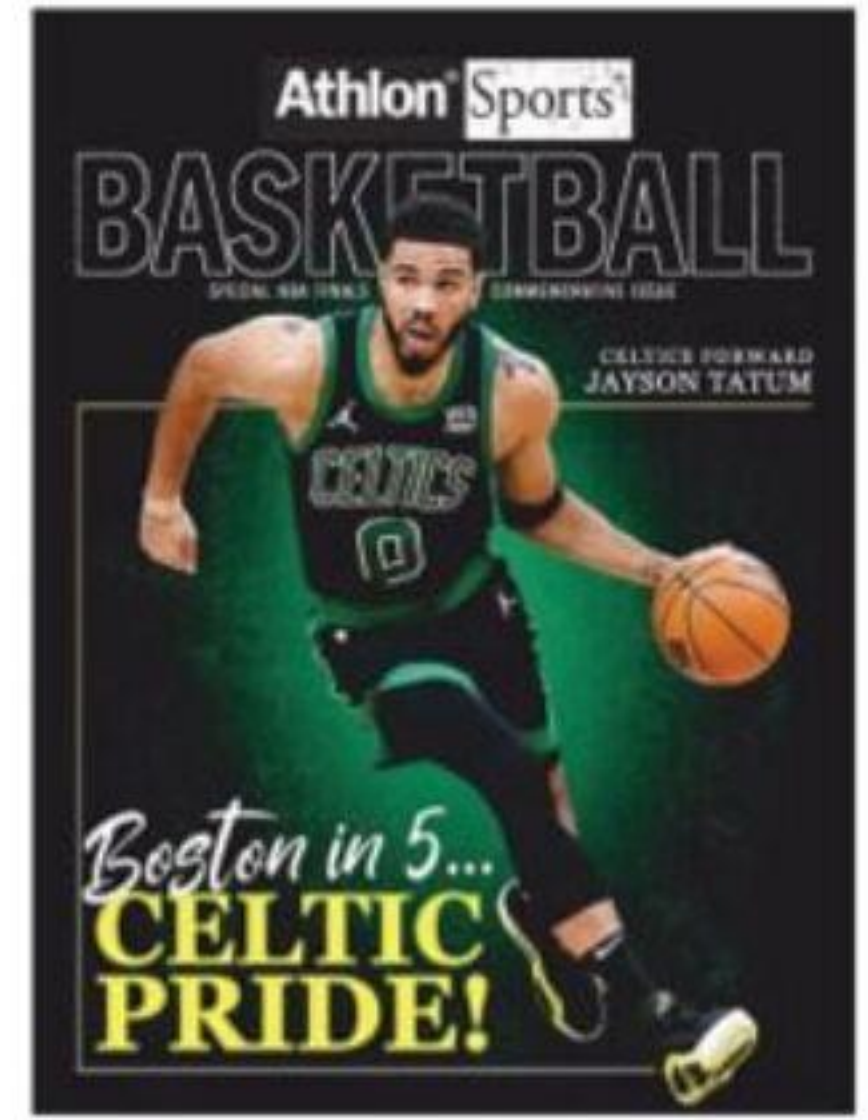
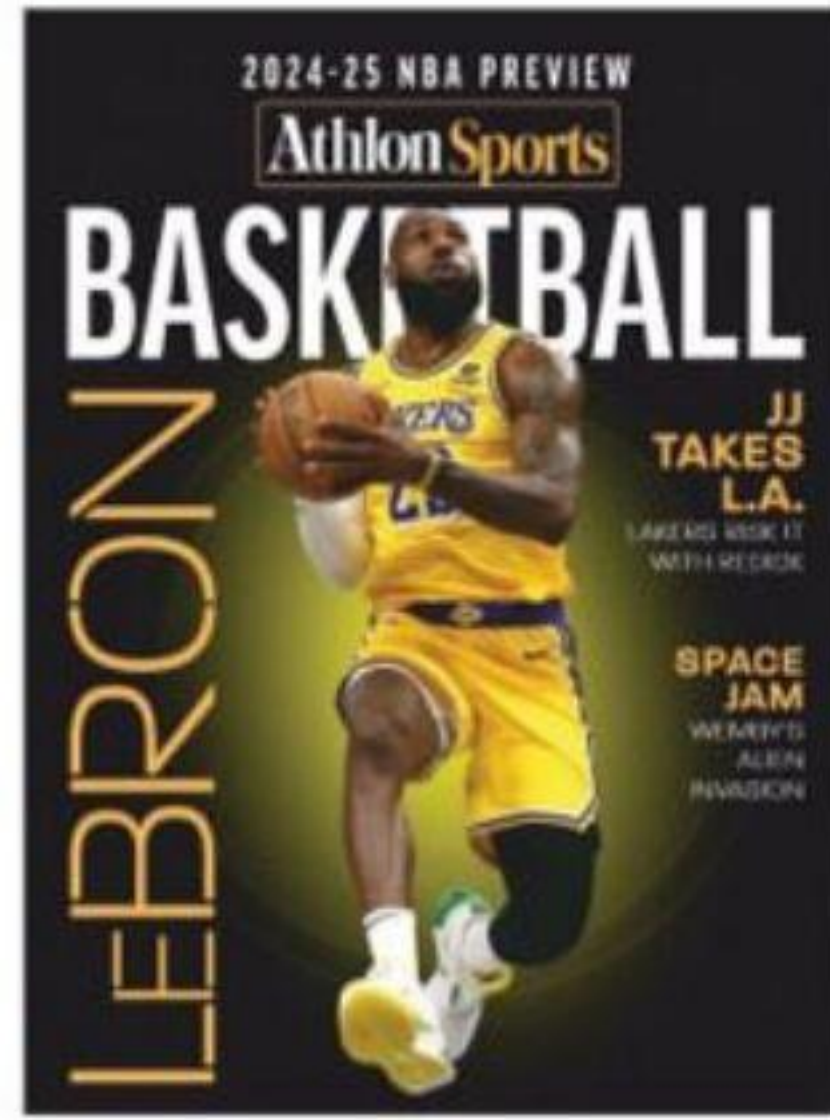
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